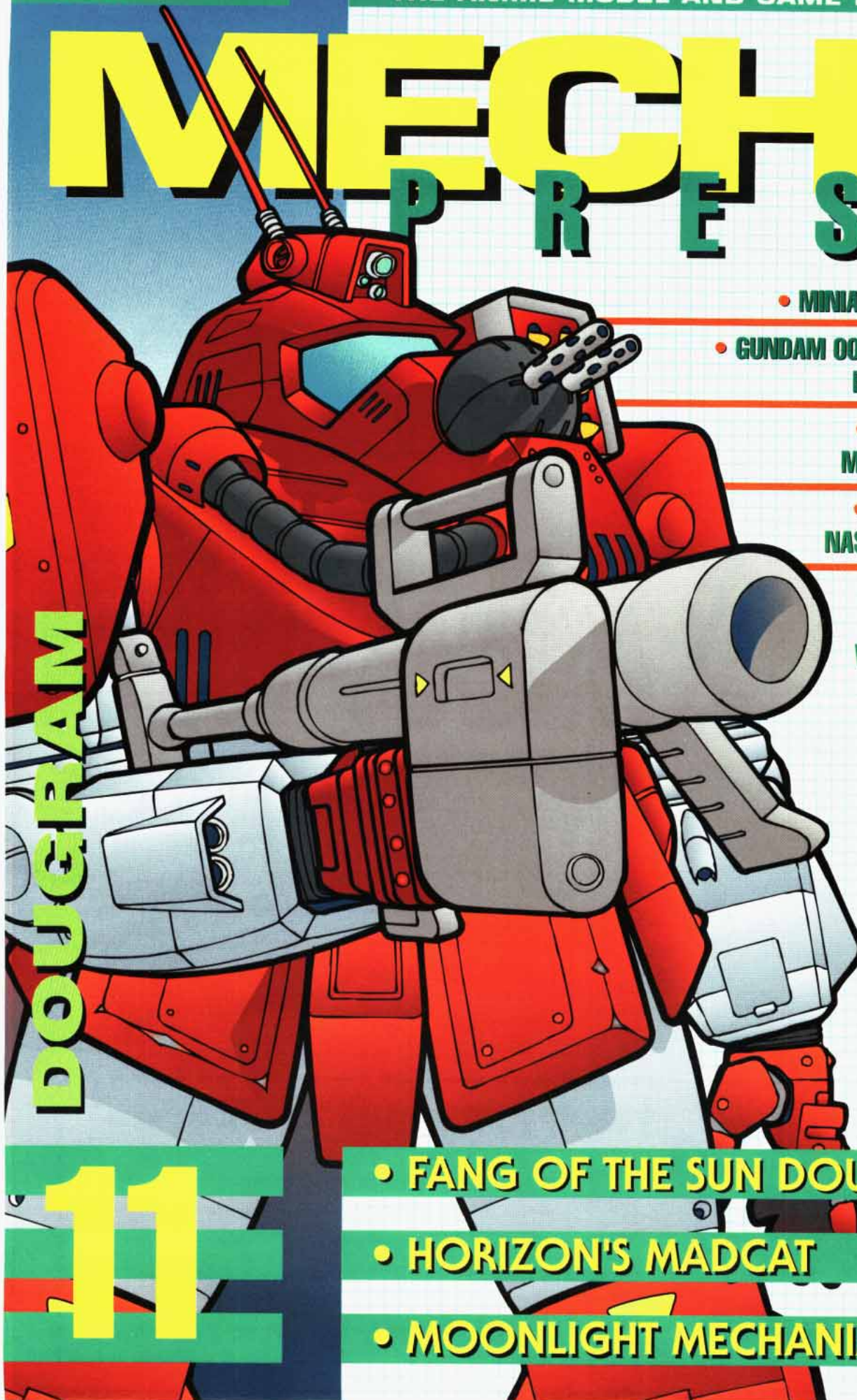


MECHA PRESS



DOUGRAM

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• MINIATURE REVIEWS

• GUNDAM 0083 SYNOPSIS:
EPISODES 9-11

• MOBILE SUIT
MEKTON PART II

• BATTLETECH:
NASHAN'S ARENA

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• FANG OF THE SUN DOUGRAM

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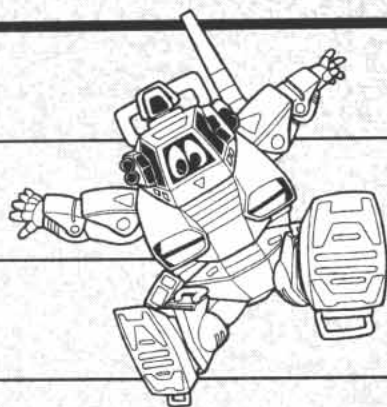
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BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND

The big question you asked yourself when you picked up this magazine was "weren't they supposed to change the name?" Yes, it was supposed to happen. However, it seems that, like mad scientists, we tried to mess with perfection and almost messed up.

No sooner was *Mecha Gear* announced than we received a huge number of letters and phone calls begging us not to change the name or the magazine itself. Then the distributors got on the boat and suggested that they would not carry *Mecha Gear*, but would gladly continue ordering *Mecha Press* instead.

We may goof sometimes, but we can certainly take a hint when it is thrown in our face. People like *Mecha Press*. It may not be perfect — at least we don't think so — but it's the only magazine which covers high tech vehicles, be it in gaming, modeling or anime. For this reason, you are holding issue #11 in your hands. We used the brief respite to plan ahead up to issue #16, so we will experience as few production delays as possible in the future.

We took the opportunity to bring some additional topics in the magazine, all related to mecha gaming. Anything related to the Japanese definition of the mecha — mecha: any advanced item using high technology — will be considered. This means that you'll see some reviews of miniatures or even video games. We won't transform ourselves into a wargamer magazine or a video game magazine, and we won't forsake our beloved walking machines, but as long as there is a connection to mecha, it belongs in these pages.

* * *

The animated series we cover in this issue is both well-known and mysterious to North American gamers. It is, of course, *Combat Armor Dougram*, one of the series from which FASA Corporation licensed many of the original Battlemech designs. Battlemech fans have been asking for years "what's it like?"

Turn to page 8 and find out!

Marc-Alexandre Vézina

Marc-Alexandre Vézina

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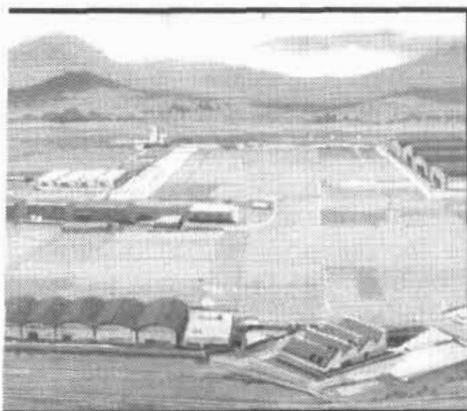
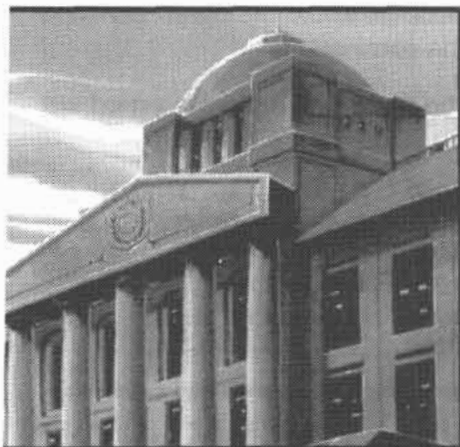
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All other illustrations comes from promotional artwork, cover art or directly from the animation (video grabs).

WHAT'S DOUGRAM

by Martin Ouellette



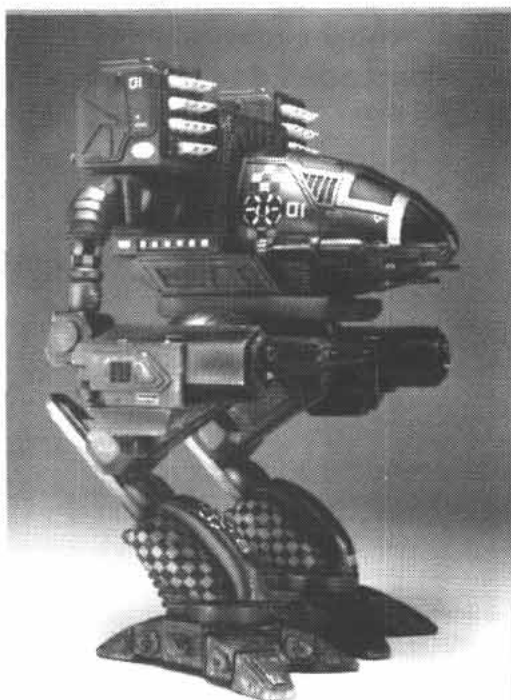
In the beginning were the "toy robots". Mazinger-Z, Gaiking, UFO Robot Grandizer and their numerous cohorts charged headlong into the sci-fi Japanese animation heaven of the beginning of the seventies and reigned supreme, until a troublemaker named Kidoo Senshi Gundam began to make them look like a bunch of idiots. And the "toy" kingdom fell...

...Into the hands of an entity named "reality". It wreaked havoc in the world of anime. While watching Gundam, the average anime spectator had been in contact with a "reality" and now expected it as a standard part of any giant robot anime. That's when the first truly realistic post-Gundam sci-fi anime appeared.

Named **Taiyo no Kiba Dougram** (Fang of the Sun Dougram), directed by Ryosuke Takahashi and produced by Nippon Sunrise, it ran for 75 episodes (3 seasons, from 10/12/1981 to 3/15/1983) and was very popular — although not as much as **Kidoo Senshi Gundam** — for two reasons: its mechanical designs and its story. The robots, named Combat Armor (CB Armor for short) were designed by Kunio Okawara, who had also done the designs for **Gundam**, and actually proved to be even more realistic than the ones in **Gundam**! It goes without saying that this helped to further Okawara's career, as he went on to work on **Armored Trooper VOTOMS**, **Zeta Gundam** and so on (he is working on **V-Gundam** at this very moment. Ed.).

The story, just as in **Gundam**, was very intricate, with an incredible number of characters — nearly twenty of them! — coming in and out. Basically, it describes the Independence War waged by the Sun Fang guerrilla team on the Earth colony planet of Deroia, and the multiple political maneuverings of the various governments involved. As always, with that kind of story, rivalries between characters are a good part of the plot but **Dougram** took it a little further. Kurin Kashim, the main character, actually fights the government of his own father! The story proved so successful that it was retold in **Document Taiyo no Kiba Dougram**, a movie released in July 1983, which featured new animation and, of course, a shortened story. Although not as popular as the **MS Gundam** movies released two years earlier, it was fairly successful. Maybe, one day, **Dougram** will be touched by that wave of rejuvenation that has washed over many old series in the last few years and that it will find popularity again. Maybe...

WIN A 1/35 SCALE MADCAT!



Mecha Press & Horizon Hobbies are proud to present the **Win a Madcat!** contest. One copy of the now-famous vinyl model kit — signed by the sculptor, John Ferrari — will be given away, courtesy of Horizon.

To participate, just send us a letter where you outline your favorite modeling trick in about a hundred words or less. On July 1st, 1994, we will draw one letter from the ones we received and the lucky winner will receive the Madcat!

In addition, we will publish the modeling tricks we'll receive in Mecha Press, with full credits. So don't hesitate and send in those letters now! Who knows, you might just drive a Madcat into the next battle...

JOVIAN CHRONICLES

Rafm Company just obtained the license to produce Jovian Chronicles miniatures. The first series will contain six exo-armors and should be ready in the summer of 1994. Rafm has announced that they plan to produce the whole line of exo-armors in the coming year.

The first models to be released will be:

- 1050 Pathfinder EAL-04
- 1051 Retaliator EAM-03
- 1052 Syreen CEA-01
- 1053 Wyvern CEA-05
- 1054 Vindicator EAH-01
- 1055 Prometheus EAX-C1

HORIZON'S NEW RELEASE SCHEDULE

HORIZON Hobbies and Toys was hit by the recent Northridge Earthquake. Although only 30 miles from the epicenter, the company suffered little damage and resumed business soon afterward. Unfortunately, some of Horizon's sculptors were not as lucky. Several patterns for upcoming kits were damaged, pushing back the release schedule by a few weeks.

Here are the new release dates for upcoming HORIZON kits. Please note that some of these dates are subject to change due to unforeseen problems.

Item #	Description	Release Month
HOR044	Battletech Madcat	Available
HOR047	T2 Aerial HK	Available
HOR046	T2 Sarah Connor	March
HOR053	Spider-Man 2099	March
HOR054	She-Hulk	March
HOR048	T2 Tank HK (resin)	April
HOR052	Cable	April
HOR057	Lobo	April/May
HOR059	Superman	April/May
HOR067	Steel	April/May

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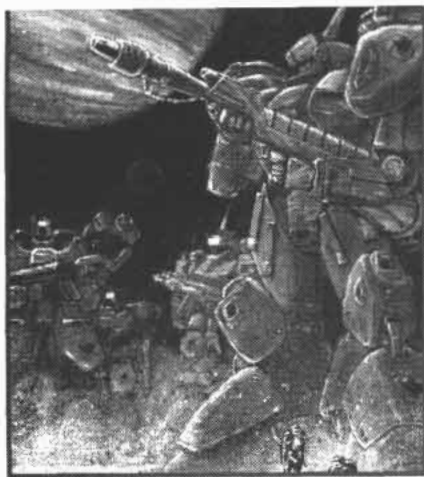
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EUROPA INCIDENT

The second Jovian Sourcebook, The Europa Incident, has again been delayed, this time by the illness of the book's main artist. Tentative release date is end of January or early February. The page count has also climbed from the original 64-page to the bigger 80-page format.

NEW RIFTS™ MINIATURES

Palladium Books are releasing more miniatures for their Rifts™ role-playing game. They are molded by Rafm, but sculpted and distributed by Palladium Books.

Currently Available

8001	Glitter Boy & pilot
8002	Xiricix Pack
8003	Coalition Soldiers #1
8004	Coalition Dog Pack #1
8005	Men of Magic #1
8006	Cyborgs #1
8007	Simvan & Mount
8008	Coalition Skelebots #1
8009	Coalition SAMAS #1
8010	Coalition Sky Cycle

New Miniatures

8011	Coalition Dog Pack #2
8012	Juicers & Crazy
8013	Cyborgs #2
8014	Atlantis Pack #1
8015	Damaged Skelebots #1
8016	Cyber-adventurers
8017	Rogues & Scout #1
8018	Brodkil & Witchling
8019	Damaged Skelebots #2
8020	Psi-stalkers & Scouts #1

MECHA PRESS IS LOOKING FOR WRITERS

Many people have been writing to request our guidelines lately. In an effort to gain even more quality material for the magazine, we are happy to present the official Mecha Press writer's guidelines.

What we're looking for...

MP focuses on mecha and other hi-tech science-fiction. Any submitted piece on topics ranging from characters to spaceships to, of course, mecha are accepted.

Models: modeling techniques, model reviews, etc.; background material, the series they come from, the designer and manufacturer.

Mecha Story: synopsis of mechanically oriented film and animation, from robot to mecha to spaceships series and films; mecha series summary and episode guides.

Gaming: gaming articles featuring mecha and ships for various game systems, such as BATTLETECH, MECHA!, MEKTON II and many others. Characters and general roleplay material are also accepted.

Please do...

- ...send us an outline (about 100 words) before mailing the whole article. There's no use in writing a few thousand words if we already have an article similar to yours in stock.

- ...proofread your material before sending it to us. If you are using a word processor, there's usually a spell-checker option which you are encouraged to use.

- ...submit material that is original and innovative, not things that have already been done elsewhere by somebody else.

- ...be concise in your writing style. Verbose authors tend to lose the interest of their readers very fast.

- ...be patient. Every submission will be answered, but there may be delays. Allow 5-6 weeks before calling us back to check on your submission.

- ...include a SASE with an **International Reply Coupon**. American stamps don't work in Canada! This will speed up the reply process.

Please don't...

- ...use the first person in your articles. Unless specifically asked for, there is an editorial policy against it.

- ...use "colorful metaphors" to express intensity or to voice your opinion.

- ...send handwritten material. This will AUTOMATICALLY reward your efforts with a rejection slip. We unfortunately do not have the time to decipher your handwriting.

Technical notes

- We reserve the right to refuse or edit the submitted article to fit graphic and content restraints. Articles submitted for publication should not contain libelous, defamatory, profane and/or hateful material of any sort.

- The individual page average word count for MP is 750 words. Sidebars, relevant facts or additional information should be no longer than 250 words each. Complete references and credits should be included.

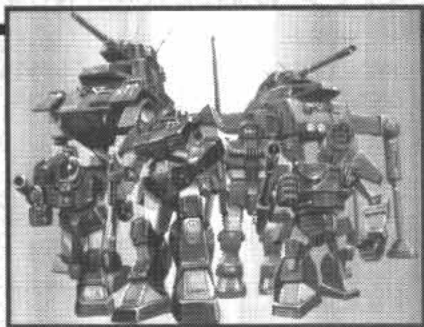
- When submitting an article, please forward a hard copy, typed, double spaced. You may include electronic versions of the manuscript on 3.5" diskettes, ASCII text format (or WordPerfect or Word or MacWrite), either IBM or Mac.

- If your article is selected for publication, you will be notified and receive a free copy of the magazine in which the article was published. In addition, we will pay one (1) cent per word, starting with a minimum contribution of one thousand (1000) words (final published word count).

- If you have any questions about submission, mail them to:

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CB ARMOR DEVELOPMENT

by Martin Ouellette

In S.C. 140 (Space Century), the Earth Federal Council's military found themselves in the obligation to develop an all-terrain heavy-weapon system to satisfy the difficult geographic conditions of their new colony. Called Deroia, it presented all the geographic and climatic features of Earth but on much more extreme terms — when it's hot, you can fry an egg on your head and when it's cold, you freeze in a few minutes. The military wanted a highly mobile, heavily armed and armored weapon system that could function in the planet's difficult conditions.

About 10 companies presented their projects to the committee, but it soon appeared that the financial risks were much too great; more than half of the companies dropped out of the competition. At first, all the companies' R&D teams could come up with were enormous tanks or trucks. This did not satisfy the military, who wanted something that would be both efficient and impressive to look at. The first draft plans were not accepted. Two months later, the second draft plans were presented and this time, the projects of two companies, Abitare Enterprises and Soltic Co., were accepted on the grounds that their ideas were extremely original.

What they had designed was rather science-fiction-like but it had the snazzy look that the military brass wanted for their new toys. Abitare's project was a four-legged tank, with arms in front and armored pods on both sides. Soltic's idea was different, as their machine was nothing less than a giant infantryman, with two arms, two legs and a head. The military were extremely impressed by the imagery summoned by such a concept, but were wondering how the company could possibly solve all the challenges presented by such a difficult project. Two other smaller companies, Samarov and Ironfoot (a subsidiary of Abitare Enterprises), also presented projects, a hovercraft and a three-legged unit respectively.

Those four companies created seven prototypes in all and several types of powerplants were developed so that the most efficient could be installed in the chosen machine. A few months later, the military made their final choice and Abitare's project was accepted, as it was the best possible machine for the harsh weather and geographic conditions of Deroia.

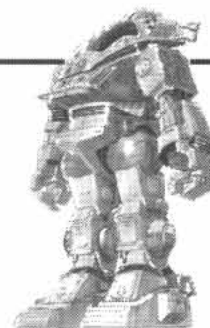
At first, 12 machines were built and tested, but there still were some problems, mostly with the power plant and the weight distribution. The F44 Crab Gunner — that was the name chosen by the company — was very high on its legs (nearly 10 meters) and rather wobbly. The military decided to keep them as intermediate measures, but put all their resources on Soltic's giant infantryman project. The machine in question was the H8 Roundfacer and it would, not long after its entry in production, revolutionize the entire concept of mechanized warfare. Only Abitare produced the walker type machines and, in all, only four models were ever mass produced.

THE HUMANOID CB ARMOR

by Martin Ouellette

Since the walker type CB Armors developed by Abitare Enterprises were not totally satisfying as far as performance was concerned, the Earth Federal Council's military decided to put their backing behind Soltic's giant infantryman CB Armor. At first, there were some problems with the mass balancing and arm motor systems, but with time, these problems were taken care of.

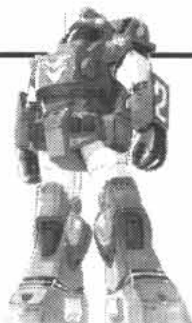
Roundfacer Prototype



The first bipedal CB Armor to be put into service was the Soltic H8 Roundfacer, a rather simple but effective design that helped the military to judge the efficiency of the bipedal CB Armor. Soltic continued in that direction with two specialized designs: the HT102 Bushman and the H404S Mackerel. The Bushman, as its name indicates, was adapted for hot climate and was a lightweight version of the Roundfacer, while the Mackerel was a totally new design for a marine type CB Armor.

In S.C. 150, the Deroian guerrilla saw that they could not continue to fight on equal footing with the Federals if they did not have CB Armors of their own, adapted to their own needs. The Dougram was created with the help of Dr. David Samarin and was vastly superior to the Federal CB Armors, mostly

because of its X-NEBRA type computer which allowed the Dougram to adapt itself automatically to any weather or terrain configuration.



**Blockhead
Prototype**

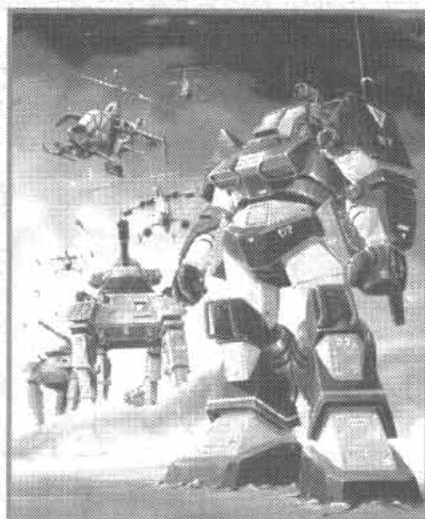
As the war spread and as the Dougram's victories became more and more numerous, it became necessary to design new, more powerful CB Armors. Those were (by order of appearance on the battlefield) the Soltric HT128 Bigfoot, the Abitate T10B/C Blockhead and the Ironfoot F4X Hasty. As expected, these machines caused more problems to the Dougram and it became urgent to upgrade the machine. This is where the Turbo-Zack system entered the scene. It gave the Dougram more speed and operational Activity Range as well as more maneuverability and firepower. In turn, the Federals produced the H8RF Roundfacer Korchima Special, equipped with a more compact Turbo-Zack-like system. This was the last CB Armor produced by the Federals during the war.



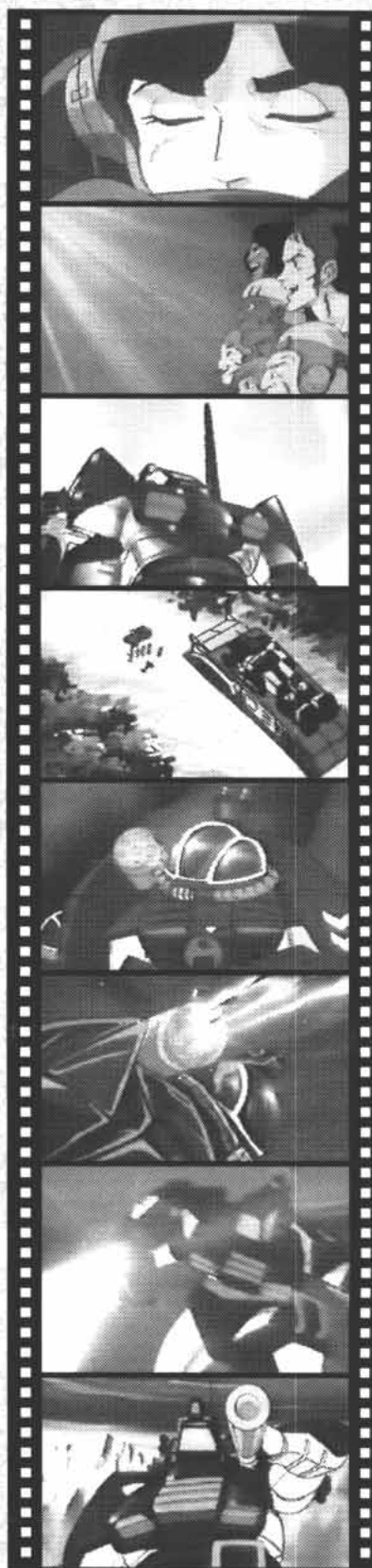
**Bigfoot
Prototype**

Diverse versions of all the machines were produced, the best known being the Roundfacer lightweight type, with all armor removed and its structure covered with a heavy cloth suit. A small company was able to produce a low-budget CB Armor. Sabarov, without any backing, put out the AG9 Nicholaev, but the armless CB armor was not a great success...

THE ANIMATION OF FANG OF THE SUN DOUGRAM



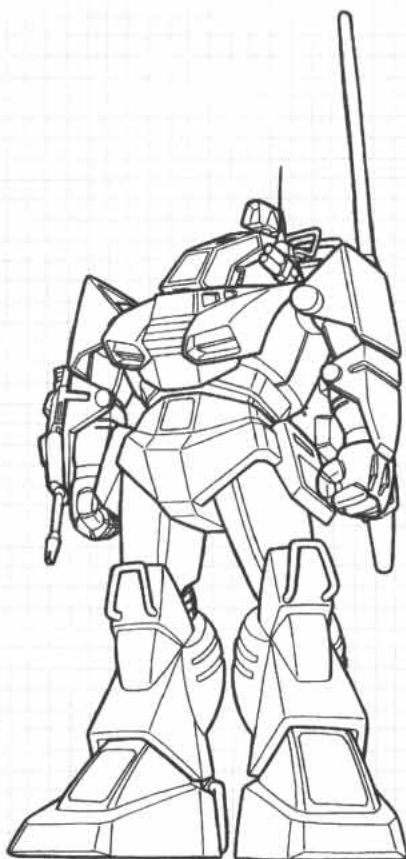
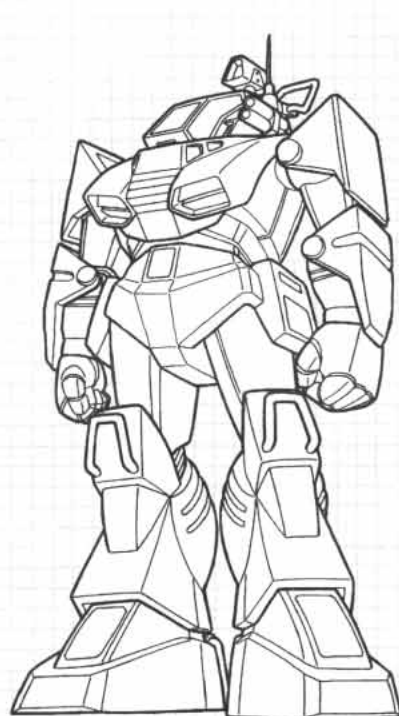
Although Fang of the Sun Dougram is an old animation (1981), it was rather interesting to watch (the fact that finding a video tape of the show is virtually impossible made it doubly so. Thanks Mike!) as a reminder of what TV animation was, more than ten years ago. It is here quite a good idea to try to make a comparison between an old show and a new one, such as V-Gundam, which is extremely popular at this very moment. Dougram's beginning and end credit songs are both very subdued and introduce a sad, almost desperate atmosphere; which is extremely different from V-Gundam's very upbeat songs. The stories, although separated by nearly thirteen years, are, somehow, relatively similar. In both of them, a team of young people are trying to reverse the effects of the war spread by their elders, who have created an order into which the youngsters feel alienated and driven to despair. In both series, these kids fight against overwhelming odds and learn of the joys of victory and pains of defeat, but the atmosphere in each is different. Dougram is closer to MS Gundam; with dark colors and music, while V-Gundam has bright colors and a racy soundtrack that perfectly convey the shonen manga feel which was the goal of its director, Yoshiyuki Tomino (who, ironically enough, directed MS Gundam). The most mind boggling fact, when you watch the two series, though, is the similarity. Some people say that anime fans today do not like big, epic stories like Dougram, that a very complicated plotline is too boring for them, that they want action above all else. This is absolutely not true! The format of such a story must adapted to the video-clip, comic flooded society of today though, and that is what was accomplished with V-Gundam. Dougram is still very good today, just as it was 12 years ago. It is only the format that is relatively old. Get some bright colors, a racy soundtrack, redesigned characters and watch this baby fly! But, all in all, we sincerely advise you to find episodes of the original series and check what it looked like to forge an opinion for yourself. You will soon forget that you are watching a thirteen year-old series and get into the story. After all, a good story is a good story.



DOUGRAM COMBAT ARMOR:

The Dougram's design and construction took place in S.C. 150 when it became evident that the independence of planet Deroia could only be secured through heavy combat. The Federals had already stationed a large number of F44 walker type CB Armor and the Soltric H8 Roundfacer was being deployed in all areas of the planet. This became a great concern for the guerrilla, as CB Armors were quite difficult to fight for lightly armed men.

Dr. David Samarin proposed, as a solution to the problem, to develop the Dougram, a CB Armor specially designed for the guerrilla forces' needs. Heavily inspired by the H8 Roundfacer, the Dougram emphasized easy maintenance, good maneuverability and adaptability as well as firepower and armor. The Dougram's incredible adaptability to all kinds of terrain and situations came from its X-NEBRA computer, which permitted the machine to fight in any weather conditions without any modifications to its programming (which was not the case with Federal machines). Since the machine was based on the Roundfacer, spare parts were easy to find, something important for a guerrilla organization. The main armament of the Dougram is a beam cannon attached to its right forearm — this is rather unusual, as CB Armor tend to have hand-held weaponry — and is completed by the usual CB Armor armament (missiles, tune guns, etc.). The Dougram is piloted by Kurin Kashim.



Code Name: Dougram
Manufacturer: Deroian Independent Movement
Height: 9.63 meters
Dry Weight: 20 120 kg
Maximum Operational Weight: 30 436 kg
Maximum Weight: 30 767 kg
Powerplant: Yale M 7 bg X 2
Maximum Running Speed: 55 km/h
Energy Storage: NM44 type battery X 6
Operational Activity Range: 225 minutes
Armament: Beam gun (forearm) X1, 20mm Tune gun X 2, Missile pod (9 missiles) X 1, Multi-purpose launcher X 2, Heavy beam cannon X 1 (Turbo-Zack-mounted)
Special Equipment: X-NEBRA multi-task computer, Shield mechanism, Turbojet (Turbo-Zack)
Crew: 1 pilot

Turbo-Zack System

This is a booster pack that allows the Dougram to operate for a longer period of time than any other CB Armor. It also augments the Dougram's armament with a powerful long range beam cannon. The only disadvantage of the Turbo-Zack is its weight.

DOUGRAM CHARACTERS

by Martin Ouellette

KURIN KASHIM

17 years old



The youngest son of the president of the Earth Federal Council, Kurin saw Colonel Von Stein's coup d'état on Deroia as an opportunity to escape his father's influence. Once there, he met Dr. Samarin and decided to join the Deroian guerrilla team known as the "Sun Fangs". He pilots the Dougram.

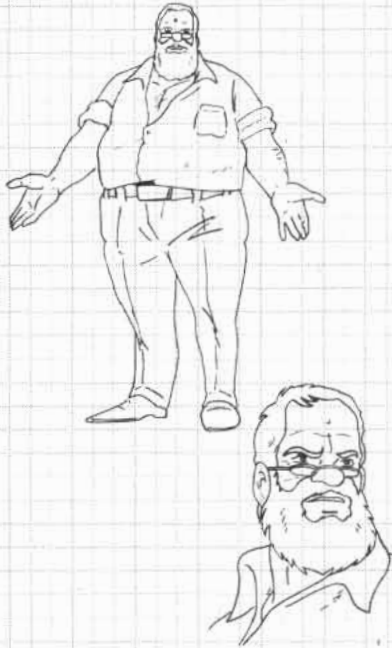
DAISY OSEL

16 years old



The daughter of Earth's Osel Foundation's president, Daisy and Kurin grew up together. She followed Kurin to Deroia and decided to help the victims of the war.

DR. DAVID SAMARIN



Dr. Samarin is a historian by education but also a leader of the Deroian Independence Movement. He was also the founder of the Deroian people's Liberation Government of Palumina and was one of the principal backers of the Dougram project.

DONAN KASHIM

57 years old

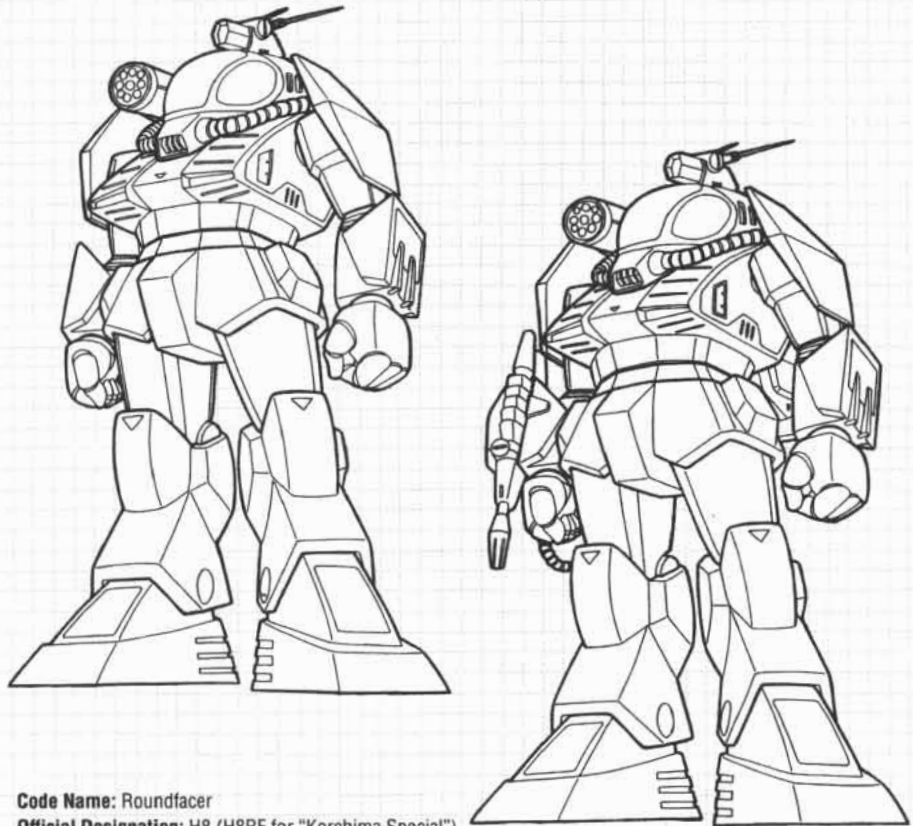


The president of the Earth Federation Council and father of Kurin. He is a very talented politician who believes that "the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few". Kurin strongly opposes this way of thinking; this is why he left for Deroia.

H8 ROUNDFACER

After the completion of Abirate's F44 CB Armor's test run, Soltic pitted themselves against the most complicated task asked by the military yet: the creation of a humanoid CB Armor. The first prototype was a test-bed for the arm systems and manipulators, while prototype number two was a totally humanoid machine which was more compact and could reproduce every movement a human being can do. Later, this machine's manipulators were upgraded from a three-fingered type to a five-fingered type.

Technically, the H8's cockpit was very aircraft-like and had an ejection seat, but even with the controls' simplicity, training pilots was a hard task. As the war on Deroia grew in importance, it became more and more evident that the H8 design needed some improvements. The machine was fitted with a booster pack similar to the Dougram's own Turbo-Zack system. The power plant was also upgraded from a Rolls-Royce N8E to an N8G. The result was an improvement of 55% in performance in both speed and reaction time. A computer similar to the Dougram's X-NEBRA was also installed. Named "Korchima Special", the H8RF was in many aspects actually more powerful than the Dougram. A light-weight version of the H8 was also created by removing all the armor and replacing it with camouflaged cloth suits to improve the machine's speed. Of course, such a machine was vulnerable, so only crack pilots were issued one (and even then, only for special missions).



Code Name: Roundfacer

Official Designation: H8 (H8RF for "Korchima Special")

Manufacturer: Soltic Co.

Height: 10.02 meters

Dry Weight: 20 965 kg

Maximum Operational Weight: 30 100 kg

Maximum Weight: 30 720 kg

Powerplant: Rolls-Royce N8E x 1 (N8G on the H8RF)

Maximum Running Speed: 45 km/h

Energy Storage: NM44 type battery x 4

Operational Activity Range: 324 minutes (286 minutes for the H8RF)

Armament: Hand gun x 1, 25mm Tube gun x 4, Missile pod (9 missiles) X 1

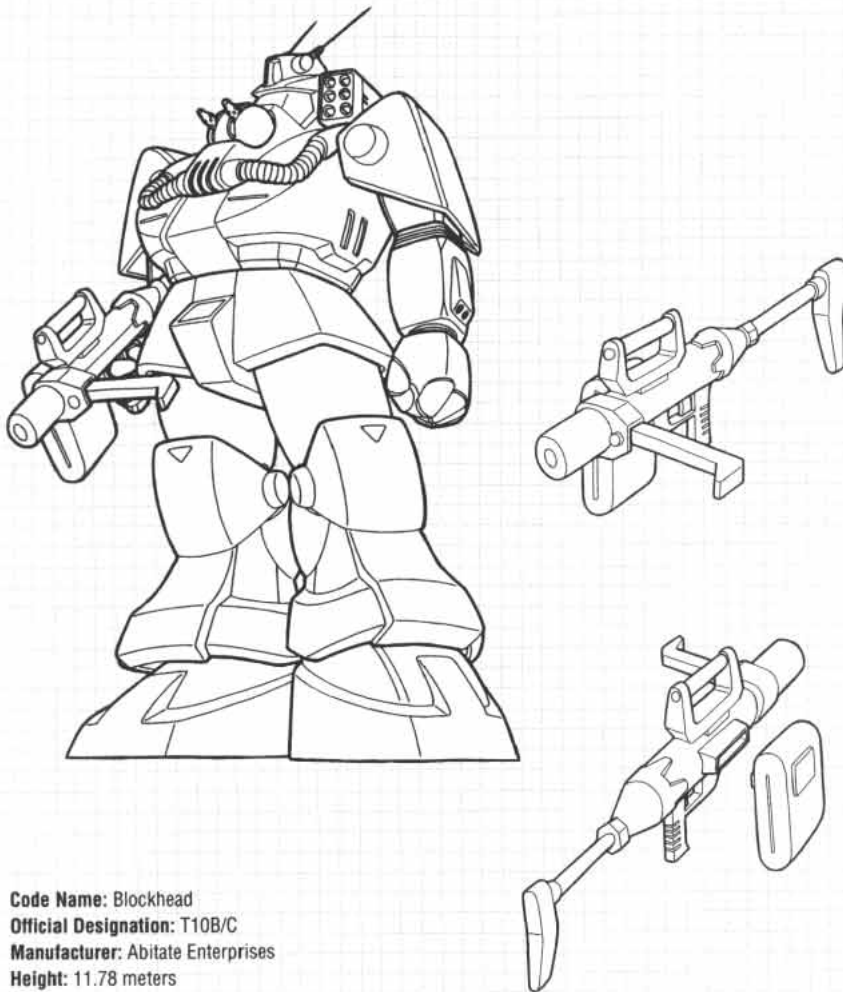
Special Equipment: Ejection seat, SV-J212 flyer

Crew: 1 pilot

T10A/B BLOCKHEAD:

As the Dougram kept proving its combat effectiveness against Federal CB Armors, the military was struggling to design a machine capable of competing against the Deroian guerrilla machine. Abitate gave them the chance when they started test runs with the T10A Blockhead, a heavy CB Armor with great potential. Mock battles staged between T10As and H8s allowed Abitate to solve many little problems.

The T10B was put into production soon after and was equipped with the N9-PW-500 power plant and the A-C201 Data Managing Computer which made the Blockhead an outstanding adversary for the Dougram. A month after the first T10B deployment on Deroia, Rolls-Royce completed their N9-PW-750 power plant. Abitate saw a chance of making the Blockhead even better and replaced the 500 with the 750, thus creating the T10C. The pilots approved, as the Blockhead's performance improved dramatically (20%) while the weight remained the same. The first T10C production run consisted of 134 machines, of which 68 were sent to Deroia. The T10B is colored in white and burgundy red while the T10C is moss green.



Code Name: Blockhead
Official Designation: T10B/C
Manufacturer: Abitate Enterprises
Height: 11.78 meters
Dry Weight: 31 022 kg
Maximum Operational Weight: 31 616 kg (T10B), 31 739 kg (T10C)
Maximum Weight: 32 244 kg (T10B), 32 295 kg (T10C)
Powerplant: Rolls-Royce N9-PW-500 x 1 (T10B), N9-PW-750 x 1 (T10C)
Maximum Running Speed: 43 km/h (T10B), 51 km/h (T10C)
Energy Storage: NM44 type battery x 4
Operational Activity Range: 250 minutes(T10B), 190 minutes (T10C)
Armament: Hand-held heavy assault cannon x 1, Ball-turret mounted machine gun x 2, Armor rifles (forearm mounted) x 4, Rocket pod (6 rockets) x 1
Crew: 2 (1 pilot, 1 systems operator/gunner)

HELMUT J. LACOCK

25 years old



The principal assistant of Donan Kashim, Lacock thinks of only one thing: taking the reins of power for himself. Donan is instrument to that but when Lacock is finished with him...

ROCKY ANDREW

18 years old



The leader of the Sun Fang guerrilla team, he met Kurin on Medoll. When he got back home to Deroia, he found the situation unbearable for his people and decided to fight back. Kurin joined him soon after.

CANARY DONETTE

17 years old



One of the principal members of the Sun Fang, she used to work in a bar of Cardinal City but when her brother was killed by the Federals, she decided to join the fight for independence. Canary grew up with Rocky and is very close to him. She has a hot temper, matching her red hair.

COMMANDER VON STEIN

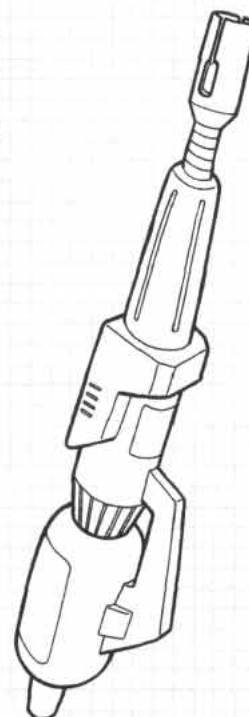
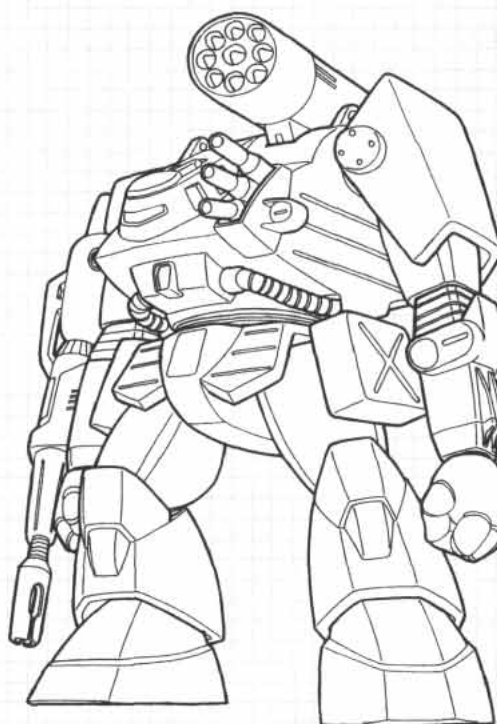


The commander of the Federal Eighth Army, Von Stein was totally dissatisfied with the Federal government's treatment of Deroia. This is what led to his Coup d'état. What he does not know is that he was used to further Lacock's plans.

F4X HASTY

The first creation of Ironfoot — a subsidiary of Abitate Enterprises — the Hasty was the beneficiary of all the experience of the mother company in everything that concerns CB Armor design. Just as the T10B/C Blockhead, the Hasty is a heavy type CB Armor and was, in fact, the second model to be designed with the A-C201 Data Managing Computer to counter the X-NEBRA of the Dougram. In early designs, the machine's weapons were all located on its shoulders, but it soon became evident that placing the main weapon on the forearm would give a much greater efficiency in combat maneuvering and utilization.

The Hasty was built as a heavy support CB Armor and its design emphasizes solidity and firepower as well as adaptability to changing tactical situations. The F4X was put into mass production soon after the end of its test runs and was quickly integrated into the Federal Deroian forces, to the great satisfaction of its pilots, who enjoyed its efficiency and the protection offered by its armor-encased cockpit.

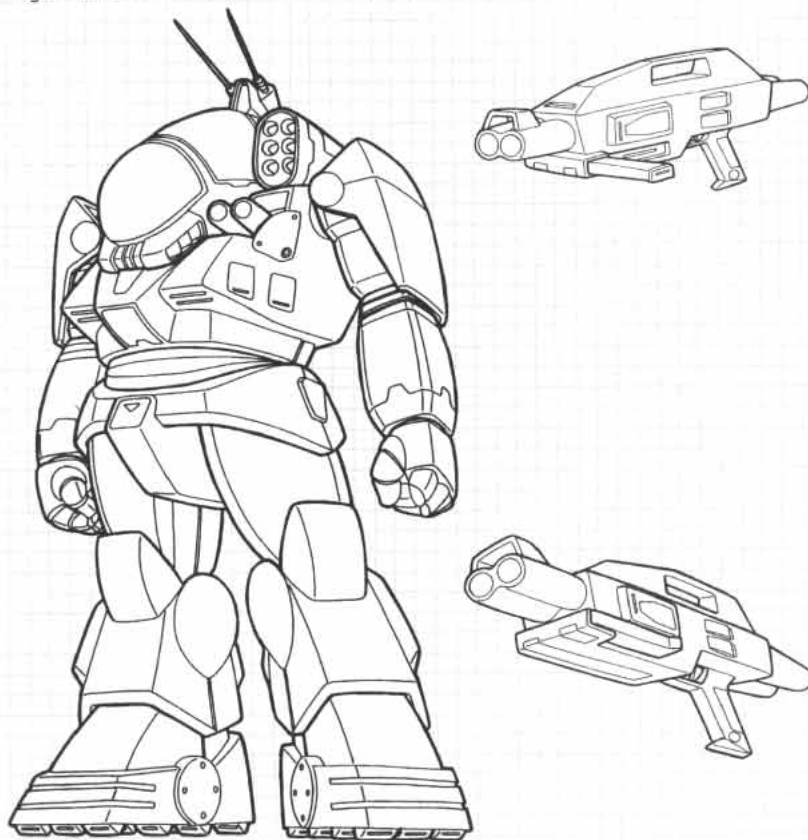


Code Name: Hasty
Official Designation: F4X (prototype 1A-G92)
Manufacturer: Ironfoot (Abitate Enterprises)
Height: 8.94 meters (not including missile pod)
Dry Weight: 29 963 kg
Maximum Operational Weight: 33 516 kg
Maximum Weight: 35 610 kg
Powerplant: Rolls-Royce N13-GF x 1
Maximum Running Speed: 47 km/h
Energy Storage: NM46 type batteries x 5
Operational Activity Range: 275 minutes
Armament: Beam gun (heavy type) x 1, Armor rifle x 2, Missile pod (9 missiles) x 1, Multi-purpose mortar x 3
Crew: 1 pilot

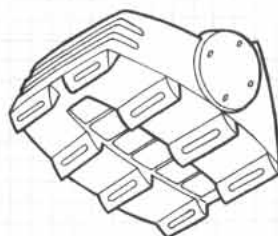
HT128 BIGFOOT:

When the Federal military asked for a "heavy" humanoid CB Armor, Soltic got into the race late. Testing the SV-J322 prototype was more difficult than other prototypes from rival companies because of the delays in the development of an X-NEDRA-like computer Soltic wanted to use. Ironfoot's F4X Hasty and Abitate's T10B and C Blockhead were already in production when the SV-J322 was completed, but the military accepted the design nonetheless and the machine became the HT128 Bigfoot.

The Bigfoot was designed as a cold-weather CB Armor as the Federals wanted a machine able to operate in the polar regions of colony planets. Soltic obtained that contract because of their successful development of a tropical CB Armor, the HT102 Bushman. The most apparent indication of the Bigfoot's role are the big grip blades on its feet's soles. The cockpit of the Bigfoot's first prototype was a side-by-side double cockpit, but its arrangement made for an enormous head and front viewport which did not have sufficient protection. The head was re-designed and was given a helicopter-like tandem cockpit which worked much better. The Bigfoot was mass-produced as the army needed them and is still recognized as an outstanding CB Armor.



Code Name: Bigfoot
Official Designation: HT128 (prototype SV-J322)
Manufacturer: Soltic Co.
Height: 11.64 meters
Dry Weight: 27 043 kg
Maximum Operational Weight: 29 261 kg
Maximum Weight: 30 012 kg
Powerplant: Rolls-Royce N13F x 1
Maximum Running Speed: 48 km/h
Energy Storage: NM44C type battery x 4
Operational Activity Range: 231 minutes
Armament: Twin-barreled assault gun x 1, Rocket pod (6 rockets) x 1,
 Twin-barreled all-purpose mortar x 2
Special Equipment: Extreme weather cloth overall
Crew: 2 (1 pilot, 1 systems operator)

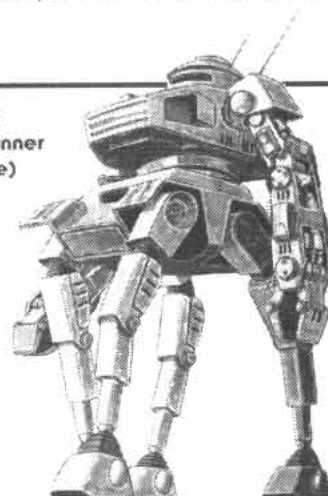


THE DEROIAN ARMY AFTER INDEPENDENCE

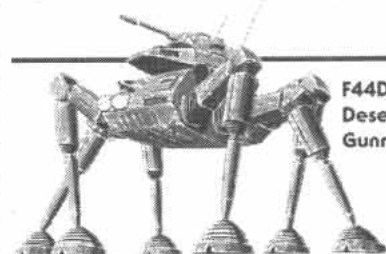
by Martin Ouellette

- After the independence war ended on
- Deroia, the Deroian army inherited a
- great quantity of armor and equipment
- from all the previous Federal State Con-
- tingent Corps, as well as the diverse

**Ironhand
(Crab Gunner
Prototype)**

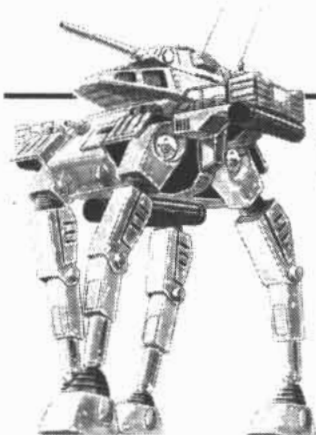


- independence movements. This amal-
- gam of men and machines was named
- the Deroian Planetary Security Army and
- started to operate as soon as possible
- after the hostilities. Its core was mostly
- composed of the remnants of the 8hr
- Corps of the Federal forces stationed on
- Deroia during the war. Although rather
- efficient, at the beginning, there were
- some problems of organization mostly
- caused by the diversity of services thrown
- together (Federal Earth Army, former



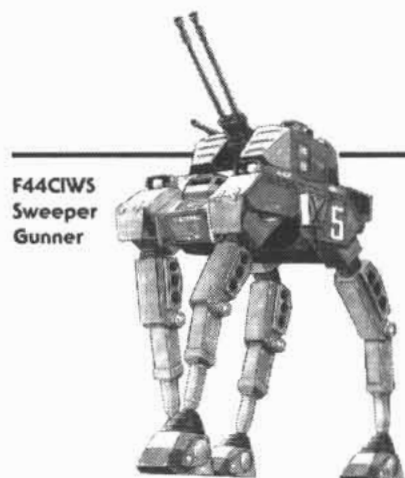
**F44D
Desert
Gunner**

liberation Movements, etc.). Soon, things as simple as combat procedures became a problem, as call signs and so on were different from group to group. Military discipline was also sticky, as the former Federal soldiers complained about the free-spirited ex-guerrilla teams' lack of proper military decorum. All in all, things worked out in the end.



**F44B
Tequila
Gunner**

One of the really major problems the brass of this new group of armed forces was the armored divisions. At the beginning, they were principally composed of old F44 type CB Armors. This was definitely not enough to insure the security of the newly independent planet, so the high command gave the order for the troops to start searching for every scrap of useful material, such as humanoid CB Armor parts, unexploded bombs and shells and so on. In time, using scrap parts and the few CB Armors still in good condition, the new armed forces were able to field a relatively important number of combat ready units of all the different

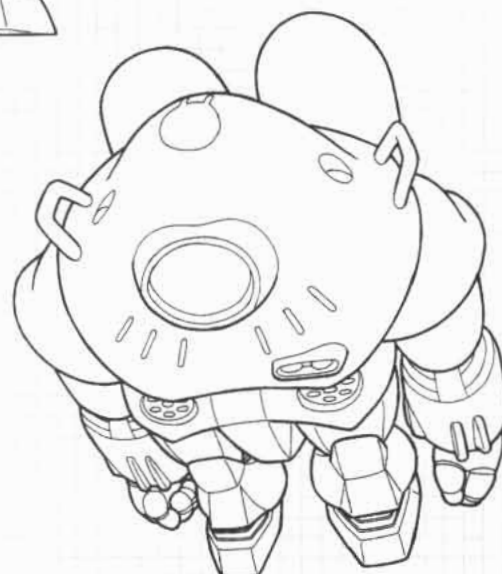
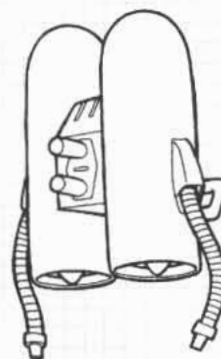
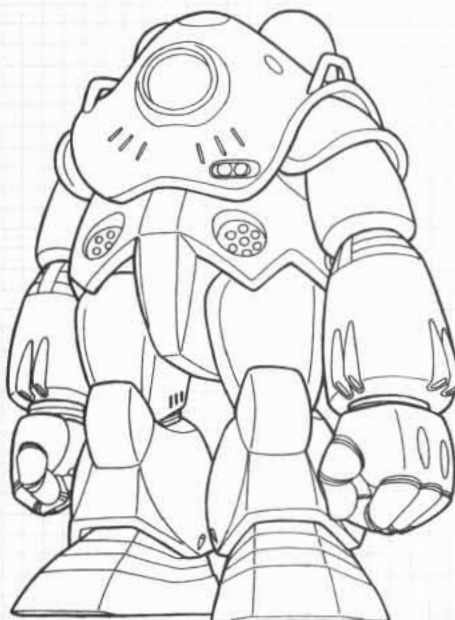


**F44CIWS
Sweeper
Gunner**

THE DEROIAN ARMY AFTER INDEPENDENCE

H404S MACKEREL

A CB Armor designed for underwater operations, the Mackerel is not what we could call a very adaptable machine. Its shape and articulation system do not allow it to engage successfully in hand-to-hand combat. Its engine, a Rolls-Royce N14-SG, is comparable to the one mounted in the H8 Roundfacer. The Mackerel's principal armament consists of two missile pods mounted in its belly. Although this armament is impressive for such a small (read "squat") machine, it just could not survive in close combat. Soltic's engineers decided to give the Mackerel a little more firepower, and that the best thing would be armor rifles. With eight of them in each forearm, the machine had sufficient firepower to face another CB Armor and maybe even win. Soltic mass produced the Mackerel for a short time, but the demand for such a specialized machine was not very high and the production line was shut down not long after it opened. The H404S saw some action on Deroia, but not much.

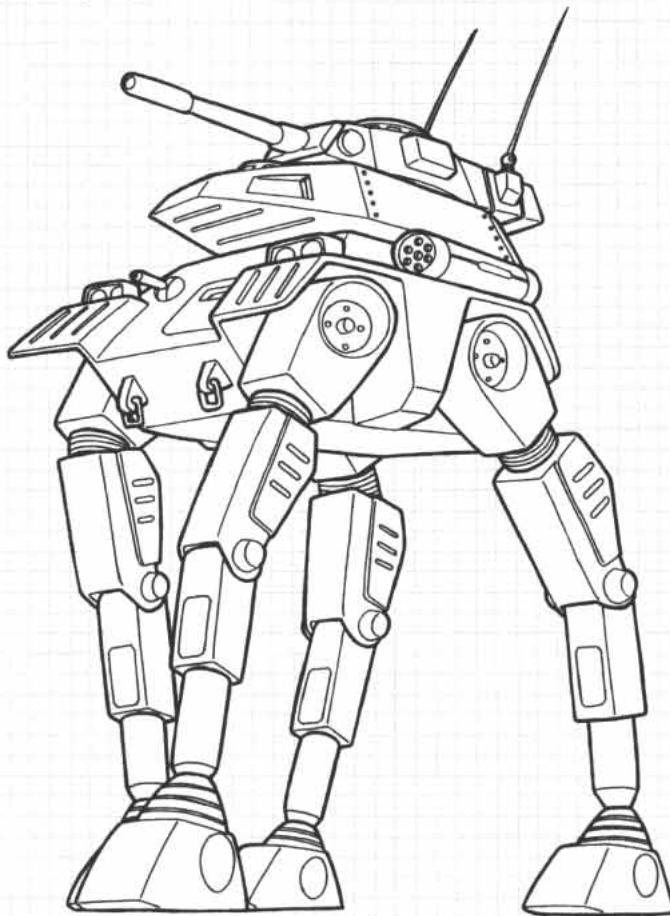


Code Name: Mackerel
Official Designation: H404S
Manufacturer: Soltic Co.
Height: 8.4 meters
Dry Weight: 19 917 kg
Maximum Operational Weight: 25 817 kg
Maximum Weight: 31 100 kg (with hydro-turbines)
Powerplant: Rolls Royce N14-SG x 1
Maximum Running Speed: 42 km/h (24 knots under water)
Energy Storage: NM44B type battery X 6
Operational Activity Range: 316 minutes
Armament: Missile pod (7 missiles) X 2, Armor rifle X 16 (8 in each forearm)
Crew: 1 pilot

F44A CRAB GUNNER:

The first of the four types of "walker" CB Armor created by Abitate, the Crab Gunner was put to the test on Deroia by the Federal military. Unfortunately, the mecha was not very satisfactory, mostly because of its lack of stability (it is much too tall) and comfort for the pilots. Technically, it is only a tank with legs. Well armed and armored, it is, nonetheless, an easy target for anything that moves faster than it does — that means nearly everything on the battlefield — mainly because it is so easy to make it trip on something! Weather was also a problem. The machine has a crew of three (but can transport more if need be). Another variant, named Tequila Gunner, is equipped with two side platforms that allow it to transport more troops and weaponry.

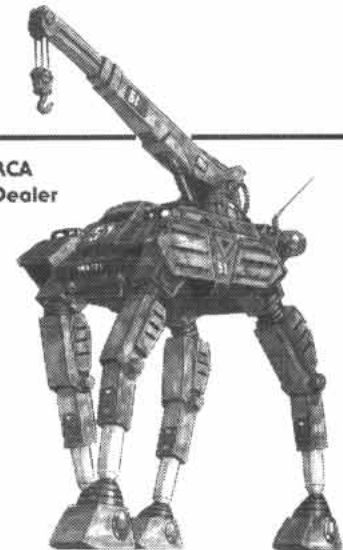
The F44 type walker was not very successful in any terrain except desert, where the Tequila Gunner was used by mercenary troops during the Deroia Independence War. The F44 types are now a huge part of the Deroian security forces. Another version, this one with six legs, was also used but did not see much action. Named Desert Gunner, it was too complicated to manufacture or use in great quantities.



Code Name: Crab Gunner (Tequila Gunner)
Official Designation: F44A (F44B)
Manufacturer: Abitate Enterprises
Height: 12.23 meters (12.13 meters)
Dry Weight: 34 621 kg (35 001 kg)
Maximum Operational Weight: 35 398 kg (36 402 kg)
Maximum Weight: 36 024 kg (36 913 kg)
Powerplant: Shin Mewa Zero KA X 1 (Zero KC X 1)
Energy Storage: NM44 type battery x 7 or NM55 type Battery x 5
Operational Activity Range: 411 minutes (389 minutes)
Armament: Main cannon X 1, 30mm machine gun X 1, 12.7mm machine gun X 1, Missile pod (9 missiles) X 2 (4 for Tequila Gunner)
Crew: 3 (9)

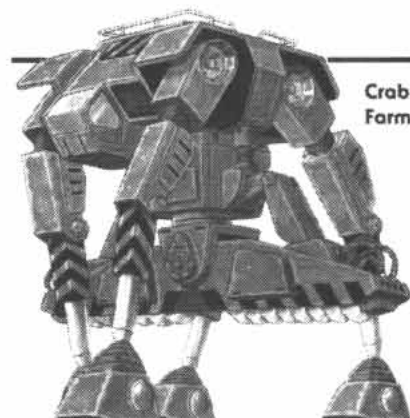
- type of humanoid CB Armors that had
- been used in the Independence War,
- with the exception of the Dougram, which
- had been at the end of the war. Of
- course, the main humanoid CB Armor in
- the new forces was the Soltric H8
- Roundfacer, in both its standard and
- Korchima Special configurations.

F44ARCA
Junk Dealer

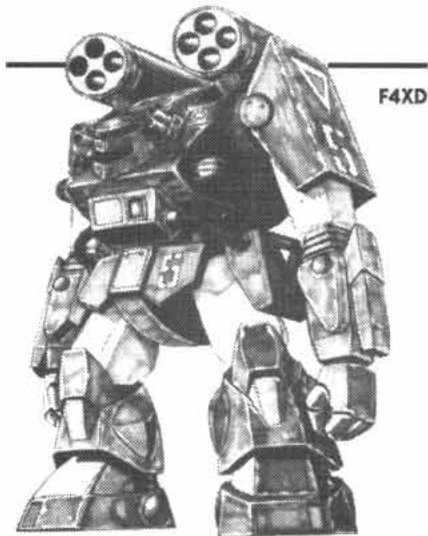


- All this was fine but one glaring problem
- remained: the utter lack of naval and air
- power. In order to deal with this, the
- Deroian government gave "carte
- blanche" to the armed forces. It soon
- became evident that the best way to
- solve this crisis was to start improving the
- correspondent material that was used by
- the Earth Federal forces during the Inde-
- pendence War.

- At the same time, the R&D teams started
- to look into ways of improving the al-
- ready existing CB Armors, particularly their
- operational Activity Range. When all the
- diverse problems were solved, a part of

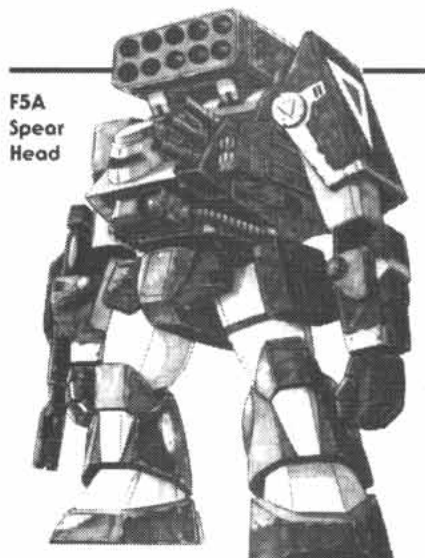


Crab
Farmer



F4XD

the Deroian Planer Security Arm became the National Defense Army, which was the rough equivalent of the U.N. forces, with all the policing power necessary for such a mission, in both local and international format (it seems that each planet had a similar force, which could be used on any other planet to reestablish peace in a democratic way, much like our U.N. organization). At that time, the Deroian economy had rebuilt itself to nearly the same level it had before the war and the mass production of both weapons and CB Armor was started again. In time, new generations of weapons and CB Armors, far better than their old war brethren appeared, sometimes surpassed the ones used by the Federal Armed forces of Earth in efficiency.

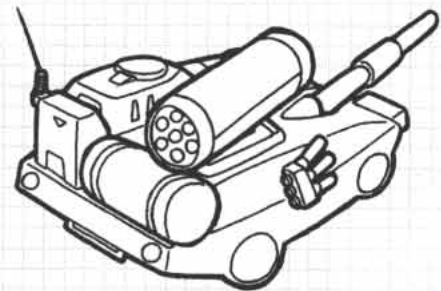
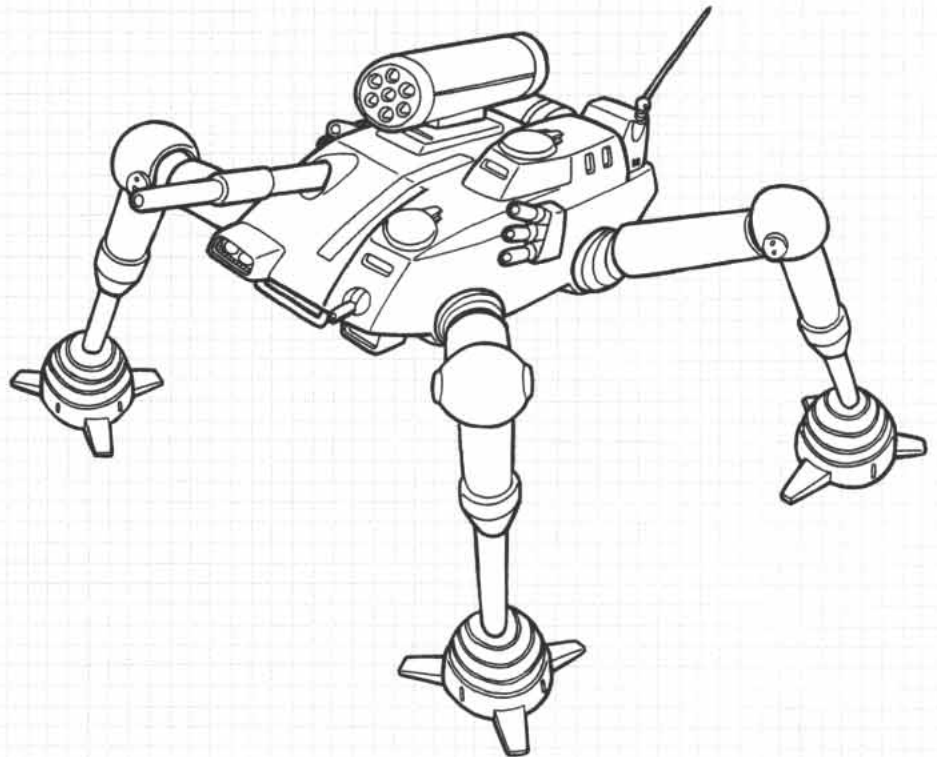


**F5A
Spear
Head**

F35C BLIZZARD GUNNER:

Back on Earth, there was a need for specialized CB Armors, especially for cold climates. The HT28 Gunner prototype was the result of Abitate's research in this direction. With the experience of the company in walker type CB Armors, the production type machine was ready very quickly.

Renamed F35C Blizzard Gunner, this model did not have the flaws of the older F44 types. In this machine, the Shin Mewa power plant was replaced by an Alankoff RM6C which was smaller and more efficient. Very well adapted to cold weather, the Blizzard Gunner was equipped with a heat sink system that allows it to melt ice and snow to camouflage itself. Although it was not massively produced, the F35C was a significant development in walker type CB Armor technology.



Code Name: Blizzard Gunner
Official Designation: F35C
Manufacturer: Abitate Enterprises
Height: 10.36 meters
Dry Weight: 29 650 kg
Maximum Operational Weight: 32 543 kg
Maximum Weight: 32 741 kg
Powerplant: Alankoff RM6C X 1
Maximum Running Speed: 45 km/h
Energy Storage: NM44C type battery X 5
Operational Activity Range: 320 minutes
Armament: Main Cannon X 1, 30mm machine gun X 1, Missile pod (7 missiles) X 1, Triple-barrelled smoke mortar X 2
Crew: 2 (1 pilot, 1 systems operator/gunner)

THE THUNDERING MADCAT

By the Dream Pod 9 modeling team

At GenCon '92, visitors of Horizon's booth were shown what would later evolve into one of the most significant models of the year: parts of the prototype of the Madcat Battletech, patterned after FASA's famous design.

Battletech fans were thrilled when Horizon confirmed that they would be releasing a 1/35 scale version of the well-known Clan OmniMech. We contacted John Ferrari, the man who sculpted the original prototype. Let's hear what he has to say about himself and his creation.

INTERVIEW WITH SCULPTOR JOHN FERRARI

Mecha Press: John, tell us a bit about yourself.

John Ferrari: I'm 29 years old, and I live in Redondo Beach, California. I'm a model maker for the motion picture industry. I also

did some models for various Atari arcade games and of course, some for Horizon.

MP: When did you start modeling?

JF: As a kid, I sometimes built models from commercial kits — tanks, mostly. I started scratchbuilding when I was about 13 years old.

MP: What were your favorite subjects?

JF: When I saw *Star Wars* in 1977, I was so impressed by the space ships that I began scratchbuilding them. At the time they were not available from stores so I made my own. They were crude at first, but they improved as I got older and better. Space vehicles have always been my favorite.

MP: You worked on several Hollywood movies before doing work for Horizon. Could you tell us a bit about them?

JF: Some of the movies I worked on include *Alien 3*, *Batman*, *Batman Returns*, and *Cliff Hanger*. I'm currently working on *True Lies*, a new movie with Arnold Schwarzenegger. I also did some commercials.

MP: How did you come to work on the Madcat project?

JF: I entered a model in a Horizon-sponsored contest. The model was a Taun-Taun with Han Solo riding (from *The Empire Strikes Back*). I guess they liked it because they called soon after to ask if I would be interested in doing some work for them. And so I did!

MP: What made you choose 1/35 scale?

JF: Well, 1/35 scale made for a good sized model.

MP: Clan 'Mechs are modular machines. Who chose the weapons configuration for this model?

JF: FASA, actually. I took it as it was shown in the Battletech Compendium.

MP: What reference material did you use?

JF: Only the images in the Compendium.

MP: Which tools did you use to sculpt the 'Mech?

JF: I use lots of different tools when building models. A partial list: table saw, band saw, disc sander, drill press, vacuum former and the usual modeling hand tools like files and Dremel motor tools.

MP: What kind of material was used to build the patterns?

JF: I use Jellutong a lot. It's a special wood used by pattern makers because it's easy to shape and the grain disappears under a couple of coats of primer. I also use styrene and another plastic called Cintra: both are easy to shape and smooth out.

Sometimes I take a Jellutong part and mold it in silicon rubber. I then pull a urethane resin copy so that the final part is more solid.

MP: How much time did you put on this model?

JF: That's hard to say because there are many different steps to prepare the model so it can be molded for mass-production.

First I make all the parts separately and mold them in silicon rubber. Then I cast resin parts which I assemble and paint for the final model. If it works, the original parts are then used to create the production molds. If not, it's back to work.

MP: What gave you the most trouble?

JF: Usually, the hardest thing is getting all the proportions correct with each other. You have to make sure that as you build things don't get bigger or smaller and that everything stays in scale.

MP: Are there any superdetailing kits (such as cockpit module, alternate weapon configurations) planned for the model?

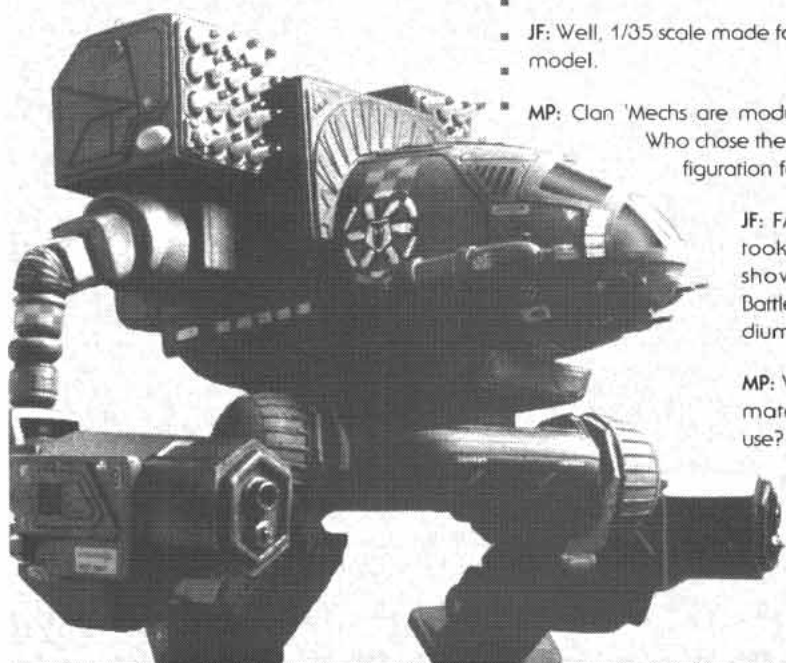
JF: I don't know. You'd have to talk to Horizon about that.

MP: Did you appreciate the experience? Would you like to work on other mecha projects like the Madcat?

JF: Yes. It was a good experience and I hope to do other models like the Madcat in the future. I've always enjoyed futuristic machinery, it's something that really appeals to me.

MP: John Ferrari, thank you.

JF: My pleasure.

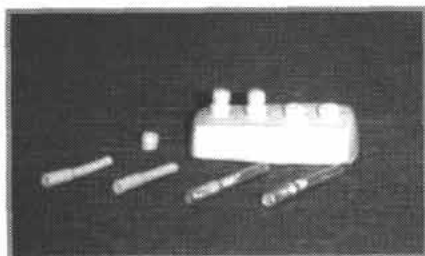


KIT REVIEW

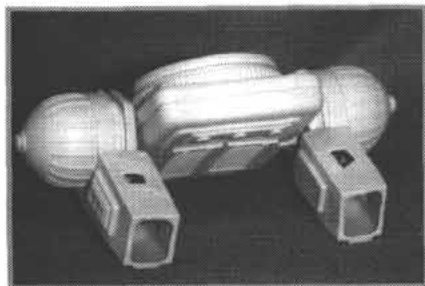
The Madcat comes packaged in an impressive 15" 1/2 X 12" X 6" box. You can't miss it: Horizon commissioned a wonderful design, very hi-tech and colorful, which shows off the model perfectly.

The inside is an eyeful. Beside the instruction booklet, the kit contains two bags full of vinyl parts, a small Vinyl Modeling Manual and a large decal sheet. A length of metal spring is also included for the tubes at the back of the legs.

The molding quality ranges from good to excellent. Most of the parts were ruler-straight, although we sometimes had to reshape them under hot water. The thin machinegun barrels stayed warped, no matter what method was applied to straighten them; we chose to replace them with metal tubing. Two different diameters of tubing were used to simulate the gun mantles.



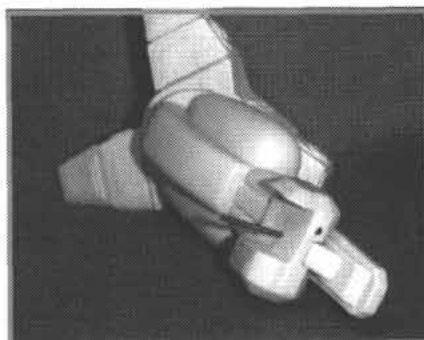
Trimming away the excess vinyl proved to be an exceptionally easy task, which surprised us. Once the pieces are prepared, they fit quite well together, especially in the leg area. The only sub-assembly which caused us major problems was the hip platform. Both upper and lower pieces were badly warped, and remained so even after repeated heating. We fixed the problem with internal bracing and generous applications of superglue. The hip assembly was



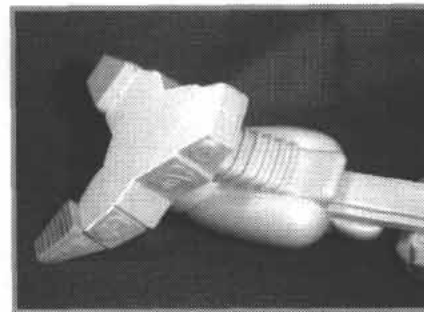
clamped down so that it would remain straight throughout the drying process. Once the glue had set, though, it looked quite nice.

The foot plates are well-molded, but they don't fit well on the Madcat's foot units. Trimming them yielded poor results, so we scrapped them and replaced them with equivalent styrene footplates. We used the original parts as a baseline to create new styrene details. The toe plates were used straight from the box, but they still needed some trimming to fit properly.

Numerous braces were installed to ensure that the model would not "wobble" and warp. We used balsa wood, styrene rods and plates and two-part resin for this operation. Bracing may be skipped entirely if the modeler prefers not to bother, but we strongly recommend that it be done. Nails were glued in the feet to ensure that the model would not topple once finished.



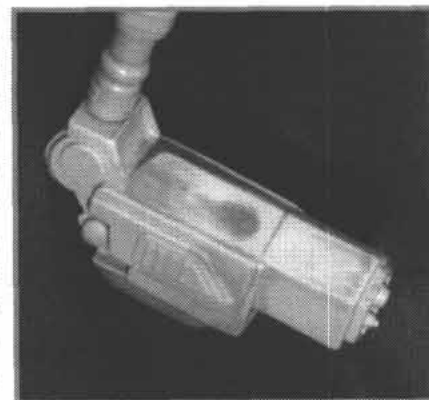
Early fit experiments proved that the knee joints were subject to a lot of stress, so it was decided to make wire support braces to alleviate the problem (see picture). The same wire braces were used in the toes so they would not break away. First, a small hole is made in the two parts — we used pencil "crosshairs"



to ensure a good alignment. The wire is then fitted and glued, and finally encased in resin so that it won't move. Holes were opened in the thigh pieces to pour the resin inside; these holes are covered by detail parts later on (see picture).

Although all major joints feature "plug-in" characteristics and are posable, we decided to glue the model in a more dynamic but static posture to ensure that the Madcat would be as solid as possible and that the paint would not chip away. Two-part resin was used extensively to reinforce the joints.

The arm units posed some interesting difficulties. They were too massive to be filled with resin; the thin arms wouldn't be able to support the weight anyway. Fortunately, the arms proved themselves solid enough to forego the usual support members. The shoulder and elbow pins were difficult to properly assemble, requiring a careful application of heat and pressure so as not to damage the parts. A V-shaped groove was cut into the shoulder plug to help in this operation.

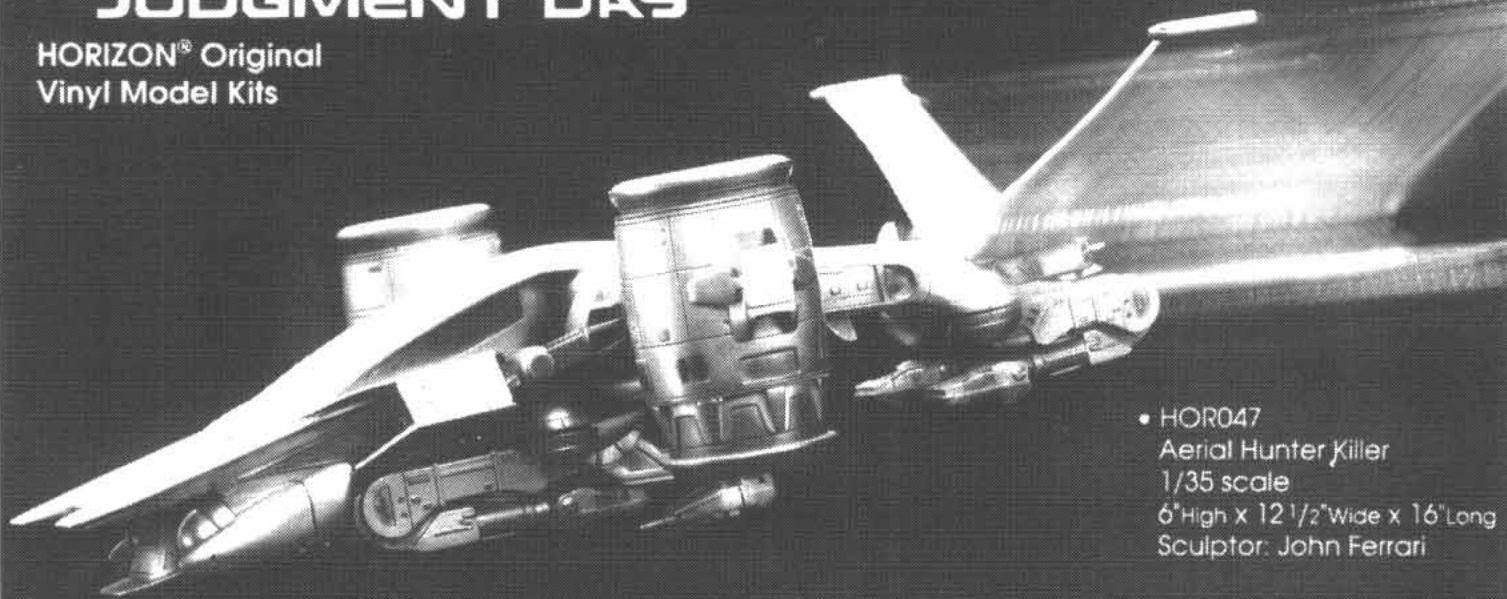


We realized that the forearm guns were not perfectly flat once glued. Some Squadron Green Putty was applied to the surface then "licked" away with a stick, leaving only enough putty to fill the depression (see picture). A sanding block was used to ensure that the finished surface would be smooth and straight. The gap running around the front of the gun is supposed to be filled, but we chose to leave it as is to represent a panel line — personal choice here.

Next issue, we tackle the Madcat's painting and weathering. See you then!

TERMINATOR™ 2 JUDGMENT DAY

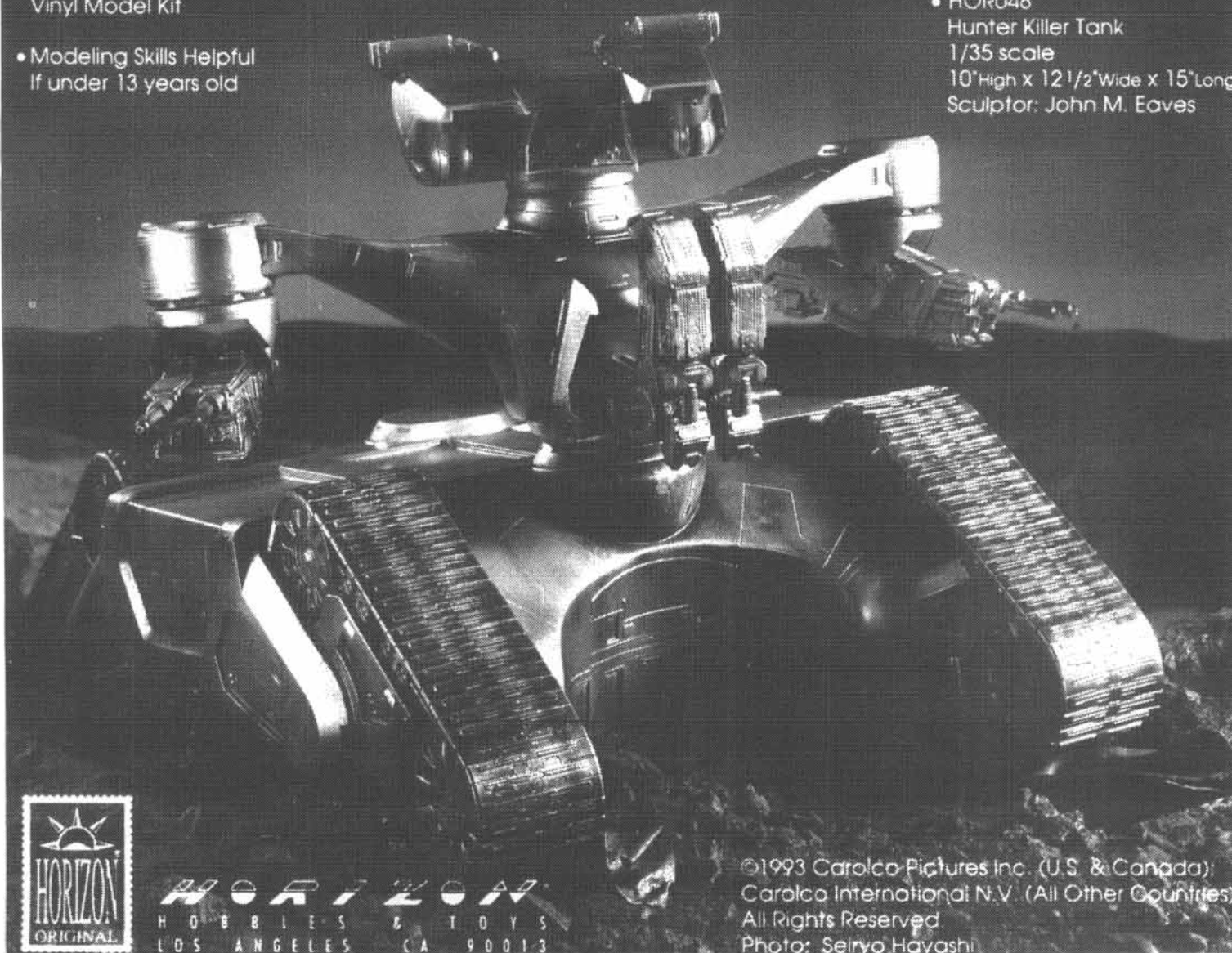
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GUNDAM 0083 STARDUST MEMORIES

Originally published in U.C. Herald #2

Episode 9: The Nightmare of Solomon

Jion leaders on Axis discuss Delaz's objective and resign themselves to the fact that they are powerless to help him except in one aspect. One soldier notes that their advance fleet, transporting a mobile armor, is on schedule to rendezvous with the Delaz Fleet. None other than Hamaan Khan thanks the soldier. She asks quietly how long they would have to wait.

Meanwhile, on the flagship of the Axis Advance Fleet, Hustler receives a message from Delaz, welcoming their participation in Operation Stardust. Without warning, a hologram of Earth appears before the ship, followed by a second message adding "welcome to the Earth Sphere." Hustler notes how Delaz appeals to people's emotions. On Konpei Island, Kou and Keith are fighting a Zaku. After it is destroyed, Keith wonders why these MS are entering the sector. Kou answers that they want to join Gato. Meanwhile, Delaz's fleet cruises between the asteroid sector and Konpei Island (the asteroid Solomon, renamed by the Federation). Delaz notes that Operation Stardust has entered its final stage, and sadly adds that they will incur a significant loss of their war potential. He wonders if it will lead to a withdrawal such as the one in Abowaku. Meanwhile, Karius searches for Gato in the Peer Gynt's hangar. Karius finds him in a corner, thinking about comrades who have died in that area. Gato asks Karius if he is doing the right thing. Karius reassures him, saying that it is a commander's destiny, and that all units have gathered for that moment. Gato concurs.

Bait takes off from the Albion, which is providing security for the Naval Review. Sinapus wonders if such a concentration of forces makes the Earth vulnerable. Hallida asks Sinapus if he thinks Unit 2 would attack Jaburo, and the captain replies no, but he adds that the Federation generals are trying to rush the Naval Review.

A tired Kou sips a drink as he watches mechanics maintain Keith's MS. Nina approaches to comfort him, but Kou is too nervous and brushes off Nina's friendliness. Realizing his mistake, he apologizes. The two then hear cries coming from the corridor, where they find Monsha torturing a Jion pilot. The pilot's spirit is undaunted, however, and he warns them that "Lieutenant Commander Gato will resurrect the Nightmare of Solomon."

On Konpei Island, Chief Inspector Wyatt proudly observes how peaceful the sector is, and his staff notes that they've destroyed 37 enemy MS so far. Wyatt prepares to transfer to his flagship Birmingham and announces that "the completion of the ceremony will mean the defeat of the Delaz Fleet."

From Gradol's Peer Gynt, Gato awaits with a mix of vengeance and determination on his face. Gradol signals his turn, and Gato blasts out of the ship. Gato looks around at "the sky of old memories," then asks Gradol to fire the attack signal. Gradol hesitates, wishing to keep the element of surprise, but Gato reasons that failure means the heavens have forsaken him. He refuses to believe that would happen, and orders Gradol to fire the signal. Gradol complies, and the Jion pilots escorting Gato stare at the light with reverence.

Aboard the Albion, Simone monitors the appearance of new enemy units in the area, and sends mobile suits to intercept. Uraki, talking to himself, believes that the battle will go on until he defeats Gato. Wyatt begins his speech, declaring the Naval Review "the embodiment of the peace and stability of the Earth Sphere," and draws a historical line between this review and Edward III's review of his departing fleet during the Hundred Years War in 1341. Wyatt implies his own aristocracy, then verbally assaults the spacenoids by saying that he can't allow "blind fools to ravage the gift of the cosmos." Gato is understandably angered and recalls the shameful retreat at Abowaku. With an icy voice, he states that Wyatt's words insult the soldiers who died on Solomon. Karius reassures him, reminding him of their purpose. Gato concurs, then orders Karius to check the compass. Karius notes that they are zeroing in on the speech source. Gato orders the Zakus to begin their diversionary attack.

Meanwhile, a Dra-C and the Full Vernian clash. The Dra-C raises its beam saber to deliver a blow, but Kou counters by activating the zitte in his beam rifle. Kou is disappointed by Gato's absence in that area, and wonders where he'll attack from. Bait and Adel also wonder about Gato's attack. Keith asks if there are any

reports on a signal received earlier, but Monsha dismisses it, saying the enemy isn't stupid enough to signal their arrival.

Wyatt, with great audacity, declares that "the Delaz Fleet will meet their doom in this sea" and that he will accomplish his task without mobile suits. The review process begins, even as the Jion attacks intensify. Federation operators spot a large contingent of Jion MS in the Ramos patrol area, and suspect it to be their main force. Bait is sent to the area. The Albion mechanics monitor communications. Uraki's voice crackles in, asking for any sightings of Unit 2. Scott replies no.

Gato enters the bay of Solomon, which is filled with debris from the One Year War. The other pilot looks around and asks, "is this sea mourning? As if they're trying to tell us something." Gato responds, "they're welcoming us. I can hear it."

The Albion pilots engage the enemy in the Ramos area, nothing that these enemy units are expert pilots. Gato, on the other hand, is deep in the bay with his escorts. While Gato reminisces about past battles in the bay and ponders the future, an unmanned fortress locks its camera on them. Gato notices it even as the video image is transferred to the Albion. Sinapus breaks out a sweat when he sees Unit 2 on the monitor. Gato destroys the unmanned fortress. Bait, Monsha and Adel are informed of Unit 2's appearance, but they are locked in combat with enemy suits and are too far away. Adel orders Uraki to intercept. Bait tells Keith to tag along as backup.

Gato destroys another unmanned fortress. Suddenly, a large number of Federation GMs appear. Gato easily destroys them, but worries that a delay would hinder them. Karius asks Gato to leave the attackers to him. He yells, "go on to Konpei Island — no — to Solomon!"

Uraki flies towards Gato's position, saying "I got to make it!" Gato assembles Unit 2's bazooka at the edge of the Naval Review area. He says, "the time I have waited for so long has finally come. To prove that the deaths of those who fell here were not in vain!" He then takes Unit 2 straight into the field of ships, avoiding their fire easily. He rockets up and locks his sights on the Birmingham. Gato exclaims, "for the second coming of the ideals of Jion — for the success of Operation Stardust — Solomon, I have returned!" Gato fires the warhead and Konpei Island is rocked by a nuclear blast. Kou stares in disbelief at the bright light.

Episode 10: The Battle Zone

Wyatt utters his dying words, "this... is Stardust?" His ship is engulfed. Light from the nuclear explosion washes over the whole sector. Kou, seething with rage, rockets off in search of Gato. Meanwhile, Cima ponders the situation. Deatroaf informs her it is time for them to move. Cima concurs, and Deatroaf orders battle stations and a change of course.

Konpei Island's sector is littered with debris. Communications channels are jammed with messages asking for help. The Albion monitors the situation from a distance. Sinapus gives orders to set course for Konpei, saying that the battle isn't over yet. Nina quietly repeats his words. Meanwhile, Gato pulls back from the scene. He ejects the now-useless bazooka and notices that Unit 2's left arm is damaged. Karius appears on his screen, congratulating him. After Karius disconnects, Gato wonders whether victory was too easy. Suddenly, shots ring out from below him, and Kou's voice screams from the radio. Gato vaguely recalls Kou and answers him, saying that he has no time to talk with his kind. Gato maneuvers behind some junk and drops a beam saber. Kou sees the saber and blasts it, wondering if he had shot Unit 2. Gato rockets from behind, but Kou turns and blocks Unit 2's beam saber with the zitte.

Meanwhile, Konpei Island's commander analyzes the situation and realizes that even with two thirds of Federation ships destroyed or immobilized, the remaining units outnumber the Jion forces. A message from the Albion comes in, saying that the ship is arriving to help. The commander angrily replies that there's nothing that can be done on Konpei, and instructs them to take unrestricted/flexible action like an independent unit should.

Kou and Gato continue to clash. Gato calls Kou a "cog in a wheel," implying he has no sense of purpose, and makes a close attack. Kou notices that the left arm isn't moving and maneuvers to attack from Unit 2's left, severing the arm shield. Gato, shocked, says "his skills have improved." Nina weeps aboard the Albion as the two soldiers fight. Unit 1 and Unit 2 lock together in a deadly embrace, as Keith tells Kou to eject. Karius does the same to Gato. Kou's Core Fighter is damaged and he exits Unit 1 by opening the hatch. He is greeted by the figure of Gato, who is escaping Unit 2. They touch helmets. Gato says "your name is Uraki, correct? I will never forget that name again." He then floats towards Karius' Rick Dom, and the two Gundams explode. Keith retrieves Kou. Simone comforts Nina, who asks why things have to be this way.



■ In another part of space, the Federation patrol ship Strawberry 9 confirms the transport of colonies, part of the colony recycling project. The crew observes how quiet that sector is, compared with the turmoil of Konpei. Suddenly, mobile suits appear before them.

● Later, a ship from the Colony Management Corporation calls out for help but receives no answer as the Gelgoog Marines plant explosives on the colony. They try to reason with the attacking Gelgoogs, saying that they are spacenoids and that the colonies are the basis for spacenoid life. One Gelgoog responds by firing its gun straight into the ship's bridge.

■ Meanwhile, Kou has returned to the Albion. Mora pulls him aside and tells him that Nina has been acting strangely. Kou thinks it's because of the loss of the Gundams, but Mora thinks otherwise. She insists that he talk to Nina and cheer her up. Kou finds Nina. He apologizes for having lost both machines, but Nina answers that she's glad he returned safely. Kou asks her what her plans are, and she says she wants to go to Earth, if Kou were coming with her. Kou refuses, saying that he thinks Stardust isn't over yet.

● When Kou mentions Gato's name, Nina angrily says that she doesn't want to hear that anymore. She thinks Kou has done enough. Nina mysteriously adds, "I'm afraid of getting too deeply involved, only to be haunted by memories which I can never forget. I'm afraid of being that way again..." Nina hugs Kou, and the two kiss.

■ Meanwhile, Linebacker One, a unit composed of GM's, arrives at the area where Strawberry 9 vanished. They are met by gunfire from the Cima Fleet.

● Cima regrets being discovered, but realizes it is too late for them to stop her. Deatroaf notifies her that all units have taken cover. The ships fire at the colonies, aiming for the explosives planted earlier. One mirror from each colony breaks off. The Konpei base commander is notified.

■ Aboard the Albion, Sinapus discusses his future plans with Kou and Nina. He believes that Stardust isn't over yet, based on Delaz's speech. He tells Nina about how only Units 1 and 2 were sent to Australia since only they needed testing under gravity. Nina reacts harshly, and Kou quickly gathers that a Unit 3 exists. Sinapus insists that they can operate it. Kou volunteers, but Nina disagrees, saying that it's a different type of MS. Sinapus informs them that the ship is already en route to La Vienne Rose to pick up Unit 3. Basrof interrupts with urgent information regarding the colony jack. Nina explains how the two cylinders will at first rotate erratically, then collide, causing one colony to bounce off and fall towards the

moon. Sinapus realizes that they can't make it on time from their current position. Upon learning of the collision, the Konpei base commander orders his fleet to intercept the colony. Simmone calculates and confirms the impending colony drop on the moon.

■ Sinapus is concerned, but opts to retrieve Unit 3 from La Vienne Rose first.

Episode 11: La Vienne Rose

● Cima smiles as her convoy, escorting the falling colony, joins with the Delaz Fleet. As one officer orders the resupply of Cima Fleet, Delaz wonders how the Federation will respond to his demands. He rejoices in the fact that Operation Stardust cannot be stopped. Meanwhile, officials of the Federation meet in Jaburo to discuss the situation. Showing little concern for the moon and more for their political status, they decide to let the Konpei fleet handle the colony drop by intercepting and destroying the enemy fleet, and using the colony's thruster fuel to alter its course. Not wishing to make new enemies, they also decide to ignore the recently arrived and supposedly neutral Axis Fleet. One official wonders why the fuel wasn't used to drop the colony in the first place. Another official reasons that the enemy fleet didn't have the energy necessary to ignite the fuel.

■ Gato, on the flagship of the Axis Advance Fleet, speaks with its captain. Hustler apologizes for not being able to participate in the operation. Gato thanks Axis for their support, and asks that they take care of the battle's aftermath. Hustler gives his word, then shows Gato a huge mobile armor being readied for combat. Hustler offers the Neue Ziel as Axis' parting gift to Gato, who solemnly looks at the towering machine and says "it is as if the spirit of Jion itself has taken physical form."

■ The Albion arrives at La Vienne Rose, a huge space vessel used by Anaheim for research. Kou explains to Keith that Nina is still against his piloting Unit 3. Nina is strangely silent on the bridge. When Kou and Keith arrive, they spot a very stern looking officer. Lt. Commander Nakahha Nakato introduces himself, and says that the Albion will be under his supervision while docked. He explains that they have been relieved of the duty of pursuing the Delaz Fleet; their new duty is to guard Unit 3 and La Vienne Rose. Keith tries to explain that the Albion needs Unit 3 to intercept the colony, with Kowen's approval. Nakato angrily explains that the Konpei fleet will handle the colony and that the Gundam Development Plan has been removed from Kowen's charge, citing the loss of Unit 2 and the Naval Review tragedy. Sinapus

MECHA SYNOPSIS

requests that Uraki be allowed to disembark for the transfer of combat data. Nakato agrees, only allowing Uraki, Nina, and the captain to leave the ship. Out in space, Delaz delights in the naive reply of the Federation, which indirectly approves the presence of Axis Fleet.

On La Vienne Rose, chief Clehna Hacswell introduces Lucette Audevie, Unit 3's system engineer. Lucette greets her old friend Nina, then turns to Kou and asks him if he would test Unit 3. Nakato interrupts, reminding her that the project has been suspended. Later, Lucette and Nina talk in the station's mess hall, where Lucette relates how Nakato replaced the test staff as soon as he arrived. Lucette refuses to accept defeat, saying Unit 3 is perfect. She then asks Nina if she could "borrow" Kou, since he possesses special skills which could handle even the complex systems of Unit 3. Nina refuses, leaving Lucette wondering about her overreaction.

Out in space, Federation ships spot the hijacked colony. As the ships prepare to bombard the target, one operator detects a large heat source from above. With a sinister hum, the Neue Ziel rockets toward the vessels. Gato let loose a barrage of beam blasts on the main ship, destroying it. The other ships are cut down just as easily.

Meanwhile, Kou walks out of a shower seconds before his door opens. Lucette steps in and shows him some computer records of Unit 3, impressing Kou. She tells him that it's up to him whether he gets Unit 3 or not. Kou hesitates breaking orders, but Lucette emphasizes the immediate need for Unit 3. As Lucette walks out, the door slides open. Nina is standing outside. Lucette teases her, saying that Kou accepted her offer. Nina objects, but Kou decides not to waste any more time, and resolves to take Unit 3. Kou shuts the door on Nina to get dressed.

On the moon, Anaheim and lunar government officials listen to Cima tease them about their helplessness. She offers the lunarians two choices, to either be smashed to death, or to nudge the colony away by igniting its propellants using the moon's laser ignition system.

Beams shoot out from the moon, hitting the colony. Seconds later there is a flash of light and a thundering explosion. Delaz grins at the sight. News of the colony's course change reaches the Konpei fleet, and the commander orders a course projection. An operator maps out the new course, showing that the colony will desert lunar orbit and get drawn in by the Earth's gravity. The commander is stunned. News of

the colony's new direction reaches La Vienne Rose. 38 hours remain before impact; the feint was to make the pursuing fleet waste their propellant. The Konpei ships begin to screech to a halt from lack of fuel.

Back on La Vienne Rose, Kou and Lucette enter the factory block. An MP hurriedly informs Nakato, in the lobby with Nina and Sinapus, about Kou's break-in into Unit 3's holding area. Nakato orders his men to remove Kou and authorizes them to use weapons. Nakato leaves, and Nina looks pleadingly towards Captain Sinapus. The captain quietly takes a communicator from his pocket.

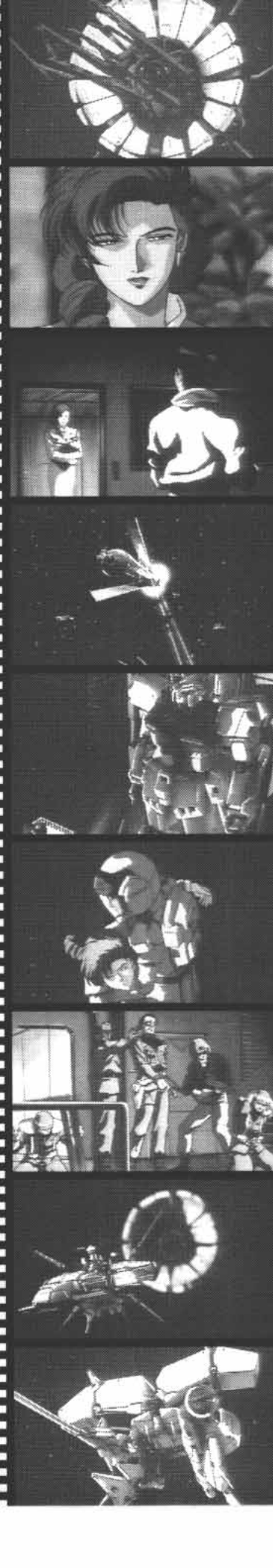
Kou has slipped into a pilot uniform. Lucette activates some lights, unveiling Unit 3. Kou notices the absence of the Core Block System and notes how the Tail Binder can also be used as a Locking System. Pleased by Kou's knowledge, Lucette asks him to hurry. Nakato and his men enter; Nakato draws his pistol. He warns Kou not to approach the Gundam, but Kou tries anyway, so Nakato lets loose a bullet. Kou tries to explain the situation about the colony to Nakato, but his words are wasted. He seals his helmet shut and leaps towards the cockpit. Nakato fires again, and Lucette jumps into the line of fire. Kou hugs the bleeding Lucette even as Nakato swears to summarily execute him.

Machinegun fire cuts through the air. Bait, Monsha, and the rest of the Albion crew apprehend Nakato's men; Sinapus levels a pistol at Nakato's skull. Sinapus reminds Nakato that their enemy is the Delaz Fleet.

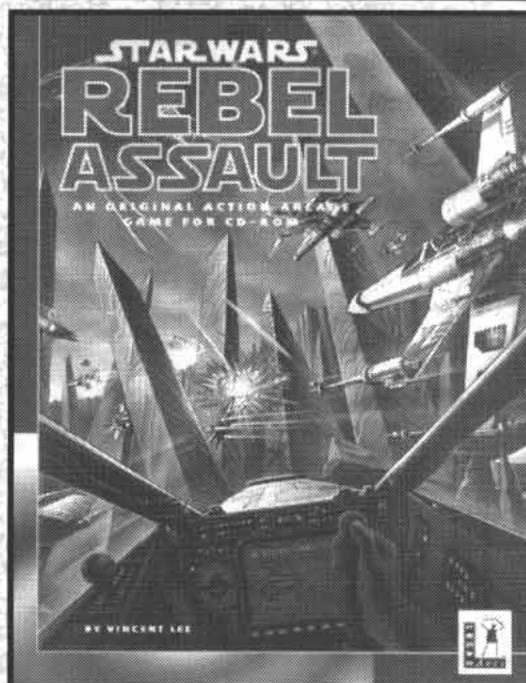
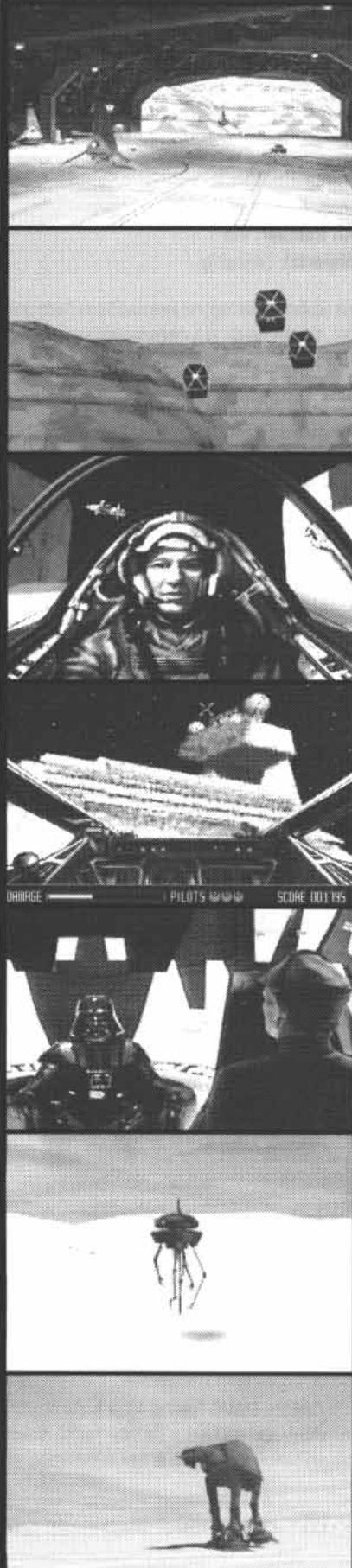
Kou leaves Lucette in Nina's charge as he calls for a doctor. The two friends speak, and Lucette reveals why Nina objects strongly to Unit 3. Nina thinks it's about her relationship with Kou, but Lucette tells her it is another reason. Nina's eyes widen as Lucette reveals she knew that three years ago, Nina and Gato were lovers on the moon. Lucette asks Nina to take care of Unit 3 and passes away. Nina weeps, and the Albion leaves La Vienne Rose. Nina and Mora ready Unit 3 for launch while Kou gets a crash course in piloting it.

The Neue Ziel rampages through space, destroying any Federation ships that attempt to follow the hijacked colony. Gato looks around and finds none remaining, then notices something new approaching. He shows concern when there is no data on this enemy. The Dendrobium, the combination of Gundam Unit 3 Stamen and its armed base Orchis, rockets toward the Neue Ziel!

to be concluded in MP 12...



REBEL ASSAULT



REBEL ASSAULT

By Marc A. Vezina

Like we said in the editorial page, we wish to expand the coverage of the magazine to all games and models related to mecha and hi-tech science-fiction vehicles. This, of course, includes video games.

While we strive to try only the newest games, some of the old ones are so good we feel compelled to tell you about them. We figure that if a game impressed us, it must be good, so it's worth talking about.

So enjoy the first of a series of article on electronic games!

Name: Rebel Assault™

For: PC Compatible w/CD-ROM

By: LucasArts Entertainment, Inc.

Everyone has seen or heard about the three movies which make up the **Star Wars** saga. The struggle of the heroic band of Rebels against the evil galactic Empire has ignited the imagination of many. The second movie, **The Empire Strikes Back**, was also one of the first to show real live action mecha, in this case the AT-AT and AT-ST imperial walkers. Mecha lovers got to see even more of those in the climatic forest battle of the third movie.

The introduction of the CD-ROM technology enables the standard 486 PC compatible computer to play some amazing animation. **Rebel Assault**, the first CD-ROM effort by LucasArts, makes you play the part of a young recruit from basic training to the final attack on the Death Star.

The game is more akin to an interactive movie than an arcade game. Beautifully rendered and animated sequences are placed between the missions, enabling the player to catch his breath. The game begins on Tatooine, where you must learn to negotiate Beggar's Canyon in an old Incom T-16 Skyhopper. No sooner are you done that the base is attacked and you pilot your X-wing against a Star Destroyer! Before escaping Tatooine, you take the time to attack AT-STs on the surface.

Even on Hoth, the action doesn't stop. First you chase some probe droids down a cave, then a full-fledged attack is launched against the rebel base. You will swear that the AT-ATs are real! The motions and the sounds as they slowly walk across the plain are a sight to behold. Be careful not to get crushed under their powerful feet as you dart underneath for that belly shot.

The programmers at LucasArts really outdid themselves in the next sequence. As the snowspeeder crashes, you rush back on foot to the base. This is fully animated by computer! No digitized actor!

The game ends with the cataclysmic attack of the Death Star. After surviving waves after waves of TIE fighters, you must descend to the surface to eliminate as many turrets as you can while avoiding laser fire. Of course, the game ends on the now famous high speed bombing run, which is guaranteed to make your hair stand on end!

Rebel Assault may be expensive, it certainly is not a "true" mecha game, but is just too neat to pass up...

HEAVY ARMOR

By the Dream Pod 9 Modeling Team

HEAVY ARMOR is a regular feature that takes a look at some of the miniatures available on the market for mechanized science-fiction gamers and modelers. Thus, while mecha and powersuits are often reviewed, don't be surprised to see a tank or a fighter once in a while.

The reviews are mostly centered on the molding and general appearance of the miniature as it comes out of its package. Whenever possible, accuracy is checked against the gaming illustration which served as template. Other review criteria include molding quality, details and so forth.

And now, the second installment of... HEAVY ARMOR.

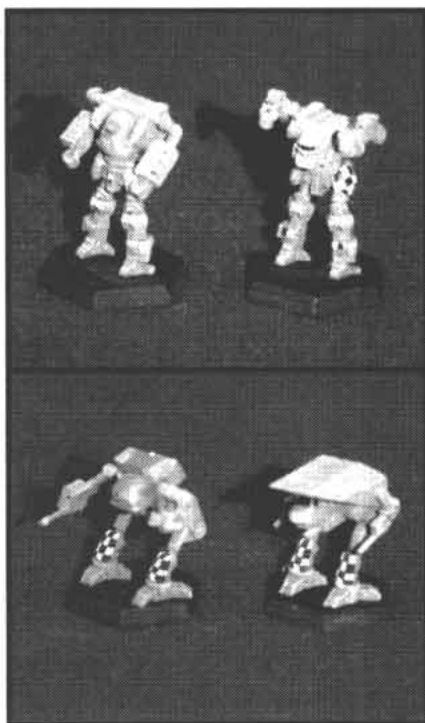


Name: EMA-105 Vigil
Manufacturer: Rafm Company, Inc.
Kit Number: 1002
Material: Lead alloy

The Vigil is a soldier mekton designed by the Elarans to replace the aging Vector which was completely outclassed by comparable Kargan units such as the Mauler or the Rampage. The miniature is very close to the drawings in Mekton Techbook, except that the legs could have been longer.

The Vigil model is composed of three parts: the mekton itself, a well-detailed shield and a backpack. The hex base is not included in the kit, but is a standard Ral Partha metal base.

There was some flash on the model, mostly between the arms and legs, but it was easy to remove. The beam cannon was bent, but it was a simple matter to bend it back to its correct shape.



Name: Light Omni 'Mechs Boxed Set
Manufacturer: Ral Partha Enterprises, Inc.
Kit Number: 10-840
Material: Ralidium™ alloy

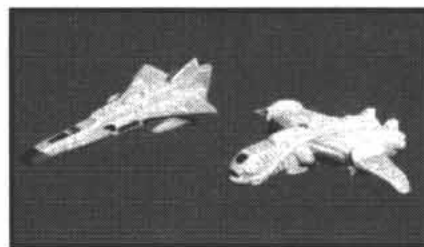
This beautifully designed Battletech boxed set contains four of the Clans' lightest designs: Dasher, Koshi, Uller and Puma (Fire Moth, Mist Lynx, Kit Fox, and Adder for Clan warriors). All four machines come with metal hex bases. Since most of the surface of these miniatures are flat, flash and mold lines are easy to remove with a set of files.

Since Clan 'Mechs are modular, all parts can be interchanged when building the miniatures. Ral Partha even included a few extra pieces such as arms and a leg adapter should the modeler decides to build a new-version. Except for the Dasher, which is represented in the "D" configuration, all Omnimechs are supplied in the basic weapon configuration.

The Dasher and the Koshi share the same lower body, which is well-detailed and flash-free. The reversed arms of the Dasher are not a design flaw, but accurately reflect the drawing in Technical Readout 3050. The purpose of this inversion is not quite clear, but it is fairly simple to cut off the fists and reattach them to the inverted arms so that they are in a more humanoid position.

The Uller was a breeze to assemble as it can stand on its own even when the legs are not glued. Simply dry-fit the model and add a drop of superglue to each joint.

The "hood" of the Puma caused some assembly troubles because the mounting holes for the arms were simply not deep enough. Also, the hood interferes with the legs, so you have to glue the leg units on first to prevent fit problems.



Name: Hell Bender
Manufacturer: Metal Express (Rafm)
Kit Number: 915
Material: Lead alloy

Yet another fighter from the extensive Silent Death collection, the Hell Bender is a medium-sized sleek starfighter with good firepower.

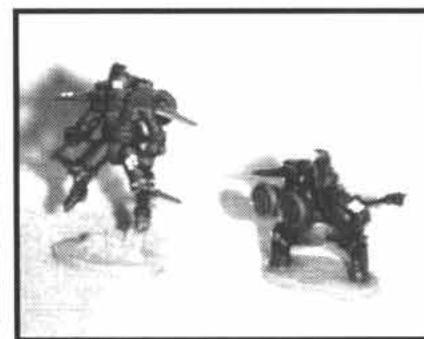
The blister pack contains two miniatures with transparent flying bases. Each fighter is molded in one piece with a thin flash line running along the side. Since there are few details, clean-up and painting are fast.

Name: Thunder Bird
Manufacturer: Metal Express (Rafm)
Kit Number: 902
Material: Lead alloy

The Thunder Bird is one of the fighters which were packaged with the Silent Death boxed game. The blister pack version contains two fighters along with flying bases.

The miniatures, while attractive, bear only a vague resemblance to the design pictured in the Silent Death manual. This is quite understandable as the original design bristles with guns, antennae and thrust deflectors.

The ship is easy to clean-up, except toward the nose where extra caution is needed to avoid losing details.



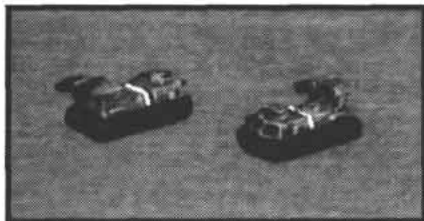
Name: Coalition SAMAS Powered Armor, pack #1
Manufacturer: Palladium Books w/Rafm Company, Inc.
Kit Number: 8009
Material: Non-lead metal alloy

The Coalition SAMAS Powered Armor is one of the most commonly seen machines in the Rifts™ world. Almost all players have either fought in or against that armor.

The pack includes two SAMAS, one standing and the other flying. Except for the legs, both models use the same parts: main body, right arm and railgun, thrusters (2), shoulder wings (2) and leg unit. The flying SAMAS has an additional base piece.

Clean-up and assembly were fairly easy, except when it came to the thrusters and wings. The small contact surfaces make the use of superglue difficult, so two-part epoxy glue is a much better choice.

Painting is a breeze since the armor is mostly black. According to published illustrations, highlights should be dark blue-gray. The identification numbers on the wing and thigh are flat white. You might want to paint the body and legs separately so that the left arm doesn't interfere when you paint the thigh number.

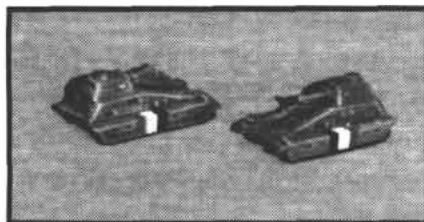


Name: Paneuropean Ground Effect Vehicles
Manufacturer: Ral Partha Enterprises, Inc.
Kit Number: 93-025
Material: Ralidium™ alloy

One of the new sets available for Steve Jackson Games' Ogre Miniatures wargame, this blister pack contains three air-cushion vehicles sculpted in 1/285 scale. This is about the same scale as the one used for mecha models, so they can be used as vehicles in just about any table-top games (including Ogre, of course).

Each GEV is composed of two parts, the main body and a twin thruster assembly which has to be glued on top of the pylons at the rear. This operation was surprisingly easy, considering the small contact surface. A mold line runs around the main air skirt but it's a breeze to remove.

No bases are included, which causes some problems for painting and handling the model. We chose to make some ourselves out of heavy plastic sheet. This preserves the model's paint and facilitate painting.



Name: Paneuropean Heavy Tanks
Manufacturer: Ral Partha Enterprises, Inc.
Kit Number: 93-028
Material: Ralidium™ alloy

Another Ogre Miniatures product, this blister pack contains two heavy tanks sculpted in 1/285 scale. Like the GEV (see above), they can be used as vehicles in just about any table-top games.

Each tank is composed of two parts, the main body and the turret. The turret doesn't have to be glued, although it "wobbles" a bit and is easy to lose. The cannon was slightly bent, but since Ralidium is soft it is no problem to bend the gun back to shape. A moldline runs around the main body, and care should be exercised when removing it so as not to damage the treads.

Painting is easy, even with the turret glued in position. The treads should be painted last, as their position make them prone to receive excess paint from the main body.



Name: AMF-X25 Rogue
Manufacturer: Ral Partha Company, Inc.
Kit Number: 1015
Material: Lead alloy

The Rogue is the biggest model in Ral Partha's current Mekton line. It stands nearly five and a half centimeters tall, and is almost as wide. The premier fighting unit of the Axis terrorist group, this unit carries impressive firepower and resembles one of Gundam's best known mobile suits, Char Aznable's Zabi.

The miniature is composed of eight parts: the mekton itself, two drone racks, two fuel tanks, large gun, shield and rear armor skirt. No base was included in our sample, although there was a small pilot figure. A standard Ral Partha base was used.

Clean-up was long and tedious due to the large amount of flash present. Mold lines are also difficult to reach, and we ended up leaving many in place. Assembly was easier, with all parts falling into place without problem. Once the model is cleaned and assembled, though, it is extremely impressive and makes a fine addition to any collection.



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PERCHANCE TO DREAM...

By Jean Carrières

Welcome to the world of *Moonlight Mechanix*, a little-known anime we recently discovered. We hope this introduction will convince you to give this series a second look...

I N T R O D U C T I O N

Player Information

The GM may photocopy this section and give it to the players. It contains basic information of which all of them are aware.

After spending centuries hidden in an underground Safety Zone, Mankind has finally re-emerged to the surface, only to find it inhabited by fierce Mutant warriors and fire-breathing dragons. The only survivors of the Behemoth Zone, a mere 1,000 individuals, have rebuilt the ruins of an ancient city and protect their small territory with four mecha and a few dozen power armors. No one knows for sure why the Behemoth CORE system went berserk, the technology to build and repair such mega-systems having been lost over the last millenia, but one certainty remains: millions died, and never again will computers be allowed such dominion over human lives.

There was a peaceful, happy society in the Zone, prior to that. Between the militia, the military and GATE (Government Agency for Tracking and Extermination), the Anashai (the mob) was hard pressed to find ways to survive and maintain a semblance of black market. People were basically happy. Then, a full year before Behemoth went rogue, a new superstar singing sensation appeared: Corina. She released five albums, which went radium all the way, then disappeared, leaving leading-edge technology to a small-time computer company. With this technology, David Ishimako, the company owner, built one mecha, the Zephyr, which was instrumental in safeguarding the Zone when Mutants came in and Behemoth went berserk. Since the day she disappeared, Corina has never been seen or heard of again.

The planet is Aurora. Its surface still has radioactive pockets, remnants of some long-forgotten nuclear war. It has one large moon, which sometimes occupies up to a fifth of the sky at night. Those full moons, when they occur, are the perfect occasion for dreaming or romancing. Because the Zoners knew so little about their world when they came out of the Zone, they have built an airship, the Icarus, which is equipped with enough firepower and armor to take them safely around the planet without fear of the Mutants. As it travels across this reborn planet, the Icarus and its crew discover new hints as to the origin of man on Aurora.

GM Information

Do yourself a favor: read through the entire scenario before running it. Warn the players that this story might not be a story after all. That there might not be a scenario to play. That there might not be even a hint of a goal to accomplish. Keep the players on their toes by not letting them know what to expect. "Might" is the keyword. Nothing is so set in stone that you can't fool around with it. Also, make sure the players read carefully their character sheet WITHOUT sharing any information with each other. Give an outline of the characters so that everyone knows what type he's choosing, but don't give away any secret (such as Grigor's love for Geneviève). Those may or may not come out in the open during the game. Tell the players that they are allowed (even required) to flesh out the character outline you have provided them with. This scenario contains a scene that is going to challenge them to the limits of their character's psychology. In short, you're going to pull a fast one on them the same way they usually do on you.

Guest Stars

KRAEL CLOUDGAZER



INT 5	REF 4	COOL 4	TECH 2
ATT 5	LUCK 3	BODY 3	EDU 6
	MA 4	EMP 6	

- General Knowledge +3
- Teaching +3
- Persuasion +3
- Awareness +3
- Logistics +3

- Krael is the village's designated Councillor (leader) for this term (2 years). He is soft-spoken, altruistic and rather peaceful.

LANIA CLOUDGAZER



INT 6	REF 5	COOL 6	TECH 5
ATT 7	LUCK 6	BODY 4	EDU 7
	MA 4	EMP 5	

- General Knowledge +4
- Singing +4
- Medical +2
- General Science +2
- Leadership +3
- Personal Grooming +3

- She is Krael's daughter and the main drive behind the village's improvements. She is strong-willed, romantic and curious.

ORIANNI WINDHEART



INT 7	REF 3	COOL 4	TECH 4
ATT 8	LUCK 2	BODY 3	EDU 6
	MA 4	EMP 9	

Orianni is a plot device and has any skill the characters have at their level-1. The players will NEVER see her awake.

MUTANT WARRIORS



INT 4	REF 5	COOL 5	TECH 3
ATT 3	LUCK 7	BODY 8	EDU 3
	MA 4	EMP 3	

Blades +2 Dodge +3
Mecha Piloting +2 Mecha Melee +1

Arrogant, merciless and proud, these warriors fight to the death.

EPISODE DESCRIPTION

Props

The team members will have a Commando-type Cyberskin as standard unit; it is described in the Mecha section. The Mutant Warriors have a personal battlesuit which provides them with the following combat-enhancing abilities:

- +1 hit/limb
- +2 SP overall protection
- 2 mecha-hexes ground MA; 10 mecha-hexes flight MA
- Powersword +1 WA/8 hits Dmg/2 hits/3 shots
- +2 hits for head & torso
- +2 Stun/Shock
- Shouldergun +1 WA/2 hits Dmg/2 hits

Do take note that those battlesuits have NO energy reading. They are, for all intents and purposes, dead and non-functional. This is not explained on purpose. The GM can either try and explain it himself, or buy the upcoming **Moonlight Mechanix** sourcebook (cheap plug, we know).

Sets

A 50-houses village with about 75% of barren land around it and a very deficient water supply (the very small river doesn't even go through the farming fields).

Episode Goal

Get the PCs to delve a little into their character's flaws and weaknesses and get them to defeat the Mutants.

Episode Summary

- Rescue of a girl (Lania) kidnapped by Mutants
- Visit of Lania's village ("Kilei")
- Supper with Krael and Lania
- Dream sequence (interview with Orianni)
- Final battle
- Wrap-up

Action

• Rescuing Lania

"The four of you have been scouting for more weeks than you care to think about and are expected to rendez-vous with the Icarus in a week at 'Greet Point 7G'. As you are headed in that direction, you notice chimney smoke a few kilometers straight east of where you are. Obviously, there is something there you've missed, probably due to yet another mapscan malfunction (those crummy pieces of equipment you have keep jamming on you!) You decide to head in that direction to quickly investigate this matter. Since you've already fallen behind schedule, you don't plan to stay too long. As you get there, you notice multiple bogies leaving a tail of dust and smoke, and heading roughly in your direction (W-SW, actually). Scanners confirm: low-level armors, signature unknown. You move to intercept..."

The group now encounters a group of Mutants carrying a young and attractive woman (Lania). They outnumber the PCs at 1.5 to 1 (# of PCs + 50%). Give the players a run for their money, but make sure they rescue Lania. Whether they get every Mutant or not doesn't matter: soon, either because their scouts have returned after taking a beating, or because they haven't returned at all, the Mutant tribe will be back and attempt to destroy the village in retaliation.

After she's been rescued, Lania will be very grateful and will insist that the characters come to her village. While Lania is no world-shattering beauty, she should be played as dynamic, intelligent and full of life, not as a maiden in distress — something she's definitely not. To insure that the players follow her, she's going to act very "flirt" and playful with the group members, but will do nothing provocative.

• Lania's village: Kilei

"The village to which Lania brought you comes straight out of a fairy tale: colorful two-story houses, large and fragrant flowers and poor yet well-dressed peasants with red cheeks and sparkling eyes. As you enter the village, a crowd comes to greet you while the children run around, shouting "Yay! Lania's back! Yay for the men in the shells!"

At this point, the players should meet Lania's father. At the news of her return, he is overjoyed and thanks the players profusely, making vows of eternal gratitude to them. The players should have a chance to meet the other members of the village (Nindel the laughing weaver, Biennele the silent herbalist, Jaelis the meditative healer, etc). All villagers are warm, caring and peaceful. They will do their best to make the players feel comfortable among them. The GM should feel free to introduce new and sympathetic NPCs.

If the players haven't felt that there is something wrong with this village, the GM should tell them so. There are three very specific things that will eventually strike the players (the GM can even add some of his own):

- These presumed farmers have fields that do not produce enough food to feed them all, something the PCs can figure out on a General Knowledge check vs DL 12 or on an Awareness vs DL 15.
- Though they live in the wilderness, the villagers have no weapons (again, roll a General Knowledge vs DL 12 or an Awareness vs DL 15) and still do not feel threatened by the countless dangers that surround them.
- There are incredible sociological discrepancies between the technology level of the villagers and their highly peaceful philosophy, displaying a timeless wisdom uncharacteristic of such a primitive culture (Sociology vs DL 10, Anthropology vs DL 12 or General Knowledge vs DL 15).

The reason is fairly simple: this village has been created especially for them by Orianni, a Neomani. The Neomani are a pacifistic race of mute psychics yet unheard of aboard the Icarus. Orianni is an envoy whose mission is to see if those "humans" are capable of enough gentleness and compassion for her race to interact with them. In truth, there is no village. Everything is an illusion in the players' minds. Everything, except the Mutants, who are real and who really want to retaliate against those who attacked their party. Though she is very afraid, Orianni remains in the mental trance required for her to maintain her illusions. Pale, pink-haired and fragile-looking, she floats in the middle of a protective sphere (10 SP) on the second floor of the village's temple, where the players are not expected to go (it's a "private" place). The players should not be aware of her existence: the villagers never talk about her. However, if the PCs do find out about Orianni, the GM should make sure Krael or Lania shows up to drag them away before it's too late. If questions are asked about the "sleeping beauty", villagers make a sad face and explain that she's the village's SoulKeeper and must not be disturbed before the time has come. Then they will say no more about this. If the PCs plan to leave before the full moon (two days after their arrival), Krael will beg them to stay and protect them from the Mutants, who are sure to retaliate after the attack their patrol suffered.

• Supper with Krael and Lania

Sometime during the day, Lania will walk to each player and invite them for supper at her father's house. The GM should have the players regroup around 30 minutes before that and discuss their respective conclusions about the village. He should insist that they act out their comments and reveal what they know by saying it (as opposed to the eternal "you heard what they said, that's what I tell you" excuse). The GM can then sit back and enjoy their confusion for a little while before having Lania come and pick them up.

"You enter the Cloudgazer's house. It is warm and decorated with taste. The ebony furnitures and silk draperies are of an exquisite quality which you don't even find in the best stores aboard the Icarus. You are politely invited to sit down and enjoy a bit of idle conversation before setting down to eat. Both the father and the daughter entertain you with witty conversation, asking much about you and where you come from."

It is up to the players to answer about the Icarus or not (more than likely, they won't want to reveal too much). Entertain their paranoia by having them roll "paranoia" rolls, making them believe the food is

Characters

GENEVIEVE "AMBER" RIVIERE

GROUP LEADER

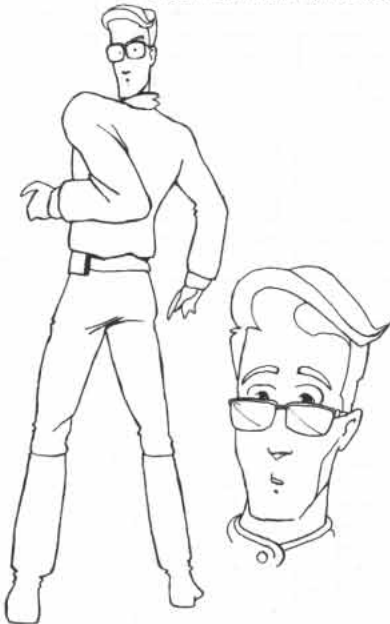


INT 7	REF 7	COOL 7	TECH 5
ATT 6	LUCK 7	BODY 6	EDU 8
	MA 5	EMP 7	

- Mecha Beams +4
- Mecha Fighting +4
- Awareness +5
- Dodge +5
- Architecture +6
- Motorbike +4
- Handgun +3
- Mecha Pilot +6
- Mecha Missiles +4
- Martial Arts +4
- Painting +7
- Ergonomy +4
- Athletics +3
- Background: Genevieve is not the typical hard-boiled 26 years old amazon she appears to be. She's an artist, a dreamer and, most importantly, a very human person. She was not trained to be a leader, but everybody looks up to her and expects her to take charge. She is very concerned about her team's safety.
- Most Important NPC: Sarah Riviere, her elder sister (28 years old), to whom Genevieve lost her fiancé a year ago.
- Favorite Hangout: Icarus Garden Baydome 3, for its nicest view, which Genevieve enjoys painting.
- Quote: "I don't want to hurt you, so I won't. But don't do this again!"

GRIGOR "JOLT" AMERIS

CYBERTECHNICIAN AND MEDIC



INT 8	REF 6	COOL 6	TECH 9
ATT 4	LUCK 5	BODY 4	EDU 8
	MA 5	EMP 5	

Mecha Beams +3	Mecha Fighting +4
Mecha Piloting +3	Awareness +4
Basic Repair +6	Electronics +6
Invent +5	Handgun +3
Dodge +2	First Aid +4
Medical +5	Biochemistry +4
Cybernetics +2	Jury Rig +4
Anthropology +4	

Background: Grigor is the stereotypical 31-year-old mad scientist one would expect him to be. He is curious, inventive and socially inept. He is very lonely, a victim of his own passion for machines, and is hopelessly in love with Geneviève. In his mind, she's as reliable as a computer, but more human than anyone he's ever known (though it doesn't mean much).

Most Important NPC: Geneviève Riviére, whom he loves in secret. She must not find out about this. If she were to turn him down, he would never recover.

Favorite Hangout: CyberTech bionetics laboratory, where he spends most of his time tinkering with those "empathy cost-free" cybernetics.

Quote: "Okay, so we're trapped. Fortunately, I have this new <Insert Gizmo Name> handy..."

drugged (it isn't), that the Cloudgazers are suspiciously hospitable (they honestly are) and that something fishy is going on (something definitely is, but not what they think: they're being "tested", measured up). At this point, the players will be suspicious and will want to ask some questions about the village. Krael and Lania will act very embarrassed if anything isn't as it should be, trying their best to convince the players that nothing is wrong (which should just convince them of the contrary). This is where the GM's job is the toughest: he must say a lot without revealing anything.

• Dream Sequence (Interview with Orianni)

Once the supper is over, the players will regroup in the house that has been attributed to them and, perhaps, discuss what they think. Play on their paranoia by having them roll 1d10 (for nothing) and, a few minutes later, by mentioning casually that they are feeling sleepy. (Truth is, there's nothing wrong with that — it's been a hard day.) Eventually, they'll go to bed.

"You lie in bed, your face bathed in moonlight. This village is a puzzling mystery. The longer you wait, the more you realize that you are comfortable there, and don't really want to return to the Icarus, to the life of a warrior. A feeling of peace sweeps over you before you fall asleep and start to dream..."

This is where starts the dream-interview of Orianni with the characters. To do that, she takes the form of their Most Important NPC and sets up the encounter in the PC's Favorite Hangout (see the character sheets). She will ask them questions which will help her determine if Mankind is "nice" or "not nice" (surprisingly, Neomani have a very manicheistic mind).

The GM should tell the characters that this is a dream. Also, introduce them to the "token", an object which they know is in their hands, but can't see or perceive in any way. They can, during the course of the dream, turn it into anything they want, but can do it only once. It will remain as such for the remainder of the interview. This is something they should be aware of at the beginning of the "test".

Each interview should last between 5 and 10 minutes, after which Orianni leaves them to dream their own dreams. It is best if the other players are out of the room when the first interview is made, then brought in one after the other once you're finished with a character. They may remain and listen, as long as they are silent (if they are noisy, throw everybody out). Remember that since they are not doing anything, they can become quickly bored, so don't drag the scenes needlessly. Though no specific order is recommended, it might be best if "Jolt" was interviewed before "Amber", because his feelings should remain a secret from her.

To Geneviève (from her sister Sarah): *"I never meant to take him away from you. You told me you understood. Why don't you ever call me anymore? You're the only family I've got left and I miss you."* (Focus on resentment).

To Grigor (from Geneviève): *"If you love me so much, why don't you tell me? Or is it yet another one of those fantasies you keep dreaming about?"* (Focus on courage and honesty.)

To Samuel (from little Maxine): *"Why did you hurt this man? Did he do something mean? Would you hurt me like that if I was bad?"* (Focus on violence and brutality.)

To Sean (from Corina): *"You often dream of me, don't you? What do I have that other women don't? Is it only because you haven't had me yet?"* (Focus on fantasizing.)

Orianni will give each a very basic "goodness" rating of -1 (not nice), 0 (unsure) or 1 (nice). The group's total goodness will determine the Neomani's opinion of Mankind and will have a definite impact on the combat the next morning.

• Final Battle

"It's been a very strange night for each of you. You've never had a dream that was this vivid, that you recalled so well the next morning. Why, you don't think you can ever forget this meeting. Your thoughts are suddenly interrupted by the sound of the alarm bell and villagers running in panic in all directions. Krael storms in your home: 'The Mutants have arrived!' he says."

This is it. The final battle. The Mutants have grouped themselves atop nearby hills and seem to be enjoying the panic they are causing in the village. This will let the players enough time to suit up and give their tear-jerking farewells to the villagers they have come to know (and love?) The Mutants outnumber the PCs 10 to 1, all of which are wearing a Mutant battlesuit. These are the ones the players have to defeat.

This is a straight no-win combat scene. However, they do have one possible ally: Orianni. If her conclusion was that they are "nice" people, they will find themselves somehow enhanced (by the Neomani's telepathic powers): they can "feel" what the enemy is about to do and act accordingly. In game terms, this means the following advantages for the duration of the combat:

- PCs cannot be surprised or backstabbed
- They are at +2 REF
- They heal at a rate of 1 hit per turn, unless they are killed.

Perform between 10 and 20 Mutant kills (roughly 30-45 minutes of game time), then extrapolate the damages on both sides until the Mutants are all dead or one (or more) PC(s) hovers near death (yes, this means you get to assign "arbitrary" damage to players — base it on how the combat went so far). Pick up the combat from that point and finish it. If PCs die, too bad. It happens. Just don't let a PC die on a stupid roll. Make his/her death dramatic and heroic.

If the characters have survived the encounter, they will soon have to leave in order to meet the Icarus at 'Greet Point 7G'. Lania will be very sad to see them go and will ask (characteristically) to go with them, something her father will recommend against. She'll reluctantly agree to stay (Orianni wishes to return to her own people, after all, no matter how attracted she might be to the characters).

Upon learning about the village, the Icarus will scan the area only to discover that there was never a village there, just grass and tall weeds.

• Wrap-up

"There you are, in the Paradise Café, waited upon by Anne, Rose and Marie Love, the identical triplets that are the trademark of this joint. The four of you are sitting and wondering about the mysterious adventure you just survived. The village in which you spent four days was gone when the Icarus hovered above it. Vanished in thin air. No one doubts your word, but there were no traces of it left. You yourself might consider it all a dream had each of you not found, lying in the grass where the village should have been, the "token" from your dream of that night."

CHARACTERS

The characters are one of the many exploration mercenary squadrons contracted by the Icarus to scout ahead of the ship and report whatever potential danger there might be. They are also under contract to lend assistance against Mutants to any human settlement they encounter.

HINTS & LOOSE THREADS

There are numerous questions that are not answered throughout this adventure. This was done on purpose so that the GM who feels inspired by it may "fill in the blanks" by himself and as such create a campaign that would truly be his own. While we offer here a few suggestions around which you might want to develop a storyline, you are welcome to take a direction all your own.

- The Neomani, who normally live in a domed city, now find themselves vulnerable to external forces (Mutants or otherwise) when the Oversoul (their collective mind-protector) is defective. They need the Icarus to help them restore the Oversoul or to teach them how to survive.

SAMUEL "BERSERK" RIM

WEAPONS & DEMOLITION SPECIALIST



INT 6	REF 8	COOL 7	TECH 4
ATT 6	LUCK 6	BODY 8	EDU 6
	MA 4	EMP 5	

- Mecha Beams +4
- Mecha Fighting +5
- Mecha Melee +2
- Demolition +6
- Hand to Hand +4
- Mecha Piloting +3
- Mecha Missile +2
- Explosives +6
- Chemistry +3
- Weapon Knowledge +4

Background: Sam is one tough dude. He likes booze, women and fighting. He chews raw coconuts, drinks still-boiling Turkish coffee by the pint and breaks bricks (HTH skill+Body vs 20) with his hands. Yet, for all his mean looks, he's got a very soft spot for kittens and kids. His birthday is in a week: he'll turn 27.

Most Important NPC: Maxine (5 years old), a young orphan he adopted after the Exodus and for whom he feels a genuine, if reluctant, affection.

Favorite Hangout: Combat Simtrain Gym, where he breaks combat droids in two and where he impresses the babes with his bulging muscles.

Quote: "Lookit da cans on dat bimbo!"

SEAN "BINAR" LAKESMITH

COMPUTER SPECIALIST & ROGUE



INT 8 REF 6 COOL 8 TECH 7
ATT 7 LUCK 2 BODY 3 EDU 8
MA 5 EMP 6

Mecha Beams +3 Mecha Piloting +4
Mecha Fighting +3 Awareness +7
Programming +5 Hacking +6
CORE Hacking +3 Pick Locks +4
Pickpocket +4 Fast Talk +5
Relationships +6 Streetwise +4
Socialize +4 Personal Grooming +6
Wardrobe +6

Background: Sean, 25, is a bold and brash young man. He's one of Icarus' best computer hackers and has actually been known, back in the Behemoth Zone, to hack the supposedly impregnable CORE system. He's extraordinarily successful with women, but, as a result of this, has become bored and jaded with them. He needs a challenge.

Most Important NPC: Corina, the white-haired singing sensation: bright, beautiful, *unreachable*...

Favorite Hangout: Icarus' B.R.A.I.N. (computer), main net room, where he attempts to create a Corina AI with the meager means at his disposal.

Quote: "I think I've reached a point where I'd turn a computer on more readily than I would a woman."

Commando Type Cyberskin HELLCAT

The mecha for this adventure are not really mecha. They are power armors. They are built following the "Roadstrikers" scale from the Mekton Techbook.

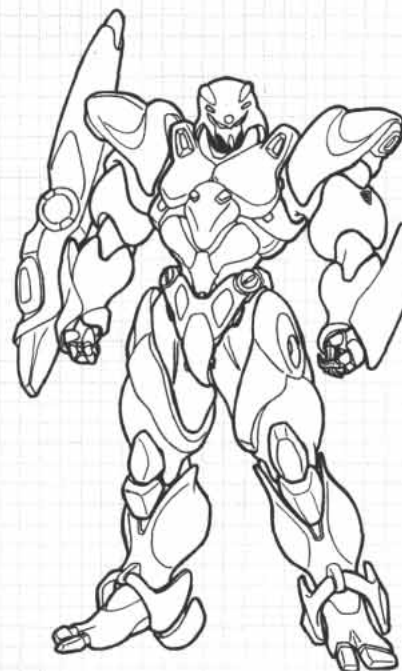
Name: Hellcat Cybersuit **Ground MA:** 1.6 Mecha hexes
Mecha Reflex: 0 **Flight MA:** 11 Mecha hexes

S Y S T E M S

Name	Hits	Armor	Space	Notes
Powerplant	8	-	-	+1 actions, +2 gr MA
Main Body	20	16	4	Scatterpulse (1 spc), Fans 6 (2 spc)
Head	10	10	3	
R. Arm	10	10	2	Hand (2 Hits), Laser Cannon (1 spc)
L. Arm	10	16	2	Pincer (4 Hits)
L. Leg	10	10	1	Fans 3 (1 spc)
R. Leg	10	10	1	Fans 3 (1 spc)

W E A P O N S

Name	Ring	WA	Dmg	# Shots	Loc.	Notes
Laser Cannon	6	+1	20H	Inf.	R. Arm	-
Scatterpulse	3	+2	10H	Inf.	Torso	Warm-up 3, Wide-angle 60°



• The Mutants launch an all-out offensive against the Icarus, forcing everyone on board to become a fighting mercenary. People start dying in great numbers, among which many friends of the PCs'. As the population decreases dramatically, it becomes increasingly urgent to find a solution other than fighting the Mutants.

• The Fangs come down from space and begin an invasion of Aurora. Can the Icarus and its crew make friends with both Mutants and Neomani in order to collectively face this new threat? How can they make pacifists fight, and how can they turn bitter enemies into trustworthy allies? A difficult task.

• There are many mysteries that need investigation: where do the dragons come from? Why are Neomani psionics stronger during a full moon? Why is the moon so large? Why are the Neomani neurologically so similar to the Fangs? Why do the Fangs want this planet? Why are there so many Zones on Aurora? Where did Corina come from, and where did she disappear to? The individual GM may find his/her own answer to these questions and build on them.

Since music is such an important part of anime, we recommend that you use a theme song/soundtrack before beginning the game. You might want to check out the theme track from *Battlestar Galactica*, which is both powerful and epic. It makes an excellent opening for the adventure. During both combat scenes, we recommend heavy metal (any will do, as long as it's hard and fast). To make a clear contrast with it, use new age (Kitaro, Enya, McKennit) while in the village. For the wrap-up, in the *Paradise Café*, use French-style accordion or some simple guitar (Suzanne Vega's *Solitude Standing* or some Jacques Brel would be a good choice).

Have fun and, please, let us know how you liked this scenario.

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JOVIAN CHRONICLES

By Marc-Alex Vézina

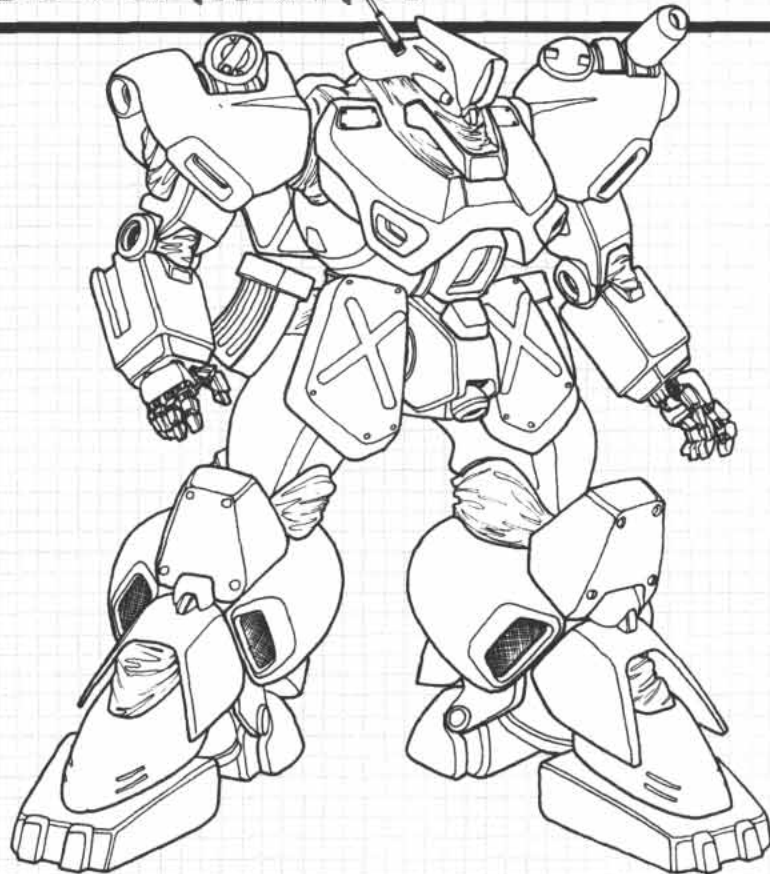
Even if the CEGA loudly claims that it has unified the Earth under one government, nothing could be further from the truth. The Wyvern Trop is one of the most glaring proofs of the state of chaos in which part of the planet lies.

Adapted for the deserts of Africa and the Middle-East, this version of the Wyvern sports air filters and dust covers over its major articulation points to protect them from the abrasive sand. The leg-mounted missile canisters have been replaced by tough knee plates in case the machine should trip. An auto-loading mortar takes the place of the 3-M3 shoulder missiles to provide support and barrage fire. The hip armor plates were modified to carry extra magazines for the LAWC-8 railgun, increasing the machine's endurance.

The Wyvern Trop is usually painted in a desert yellow/red brown camouflage, although variations are commonly seen on the field. The Trop has seen heavy action in both North Africa and the Far-East. Although it is heavily armed and armored, it still has problems with missile-equipped infantry due to its lack of anti-personnel weaponry.

CEA-05D

WYVERN TROP



Name: CEA-05D Wyvern Trop

Tonnage: 57.4

Pilot Name: various

Ground MA: 7

Flight MA: 17

Maneuver Value: -6

Actions Bonus: -

Scale: 1/1

CPs: 114.7

COMPONENTS

Servo Location	Level	Kills	Armor	Type	SP
T	MS	8	S	S	3
Head	S	1	S	S	3
R&L Arms	S	2	S	S	3
R&L Legs	S	3	MS	S	4
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
Powerplant	MW	1	-	Hot+1	-
Hydraulics	-	8	-	Standard	-

EQUIPMENT

Name	Kills	Game effects
Escape Pod	-	Last Chance!
Desert Protection	-	Filters and such
Link	-	Head Massdrivers
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-

WEAPONS

Name	WA	Range	Kills/Dam	Shots	Loc	Special
Railgun	0	6	6/6	*	R.Hand	
*Ammo Rail.	-	-	-	20	T	Standard
*Ammo Rail.	-	-	-	5	RA	AP
Massdrivers (2)	+1	2	1/1	*	H	Machine Fire, BV3
*Ammo Mass.	-	-	-	20	T	Standard
Mortar	-1	7	2/2	*	LA	-
*Ammo Mortar	-	-	-	10	LA	Burst 1
AM System	+1	N/A	3/(3)	Inf.	H	AM only
Hands (2)	+1	Melee	1/1	-	LA/RA	Quick, Handy

SENSORS

Type	Kills	Range	Comm	Loc
Main	4	4 Km	800 Km	H
Back-up	-	-	-	-

WEAPON COST

Weapons	CPs
Railgun	5
Massdriver	0.75 each
Mortar	1

• This design uses the Jovian Chronicles optional rules.

MOBILE SUIT MEKTON PART 2

by Robyn Paterson

This article is the second in a series of articles suggesting how to adapt Gundam to the *Mekton II* anime science-fiction RPG. The first article (published in *Mecha Press* #10) covered the required changes in scale and proposed a way to represent Newtype powers.

In this second installment, we examine optional rules for combat and some new, Gundam-specific technology.

"ONCE MORE INTO THE DREACH..."

Combat needs to be twisted a bit in order to better give the feel that these rules are trying to help simulate. Here are some changes we suggest:

Actions: If a Mecha Reflex score ever goes above 8, which is possible with Newtype reflexes, give them an additional action.

Combat Skill Rolls: (In fact, this can apply to all skill rolls) When a 1 is rolled on the D10, it is an automatic failure, no matter the skill's level. Conversely, when a 10 is rolled, the player may roll again and add the result to his first roll, and so on as long as he

keeps rolling 10s.

Luck: Suddenly, Luck becomes an important factor. To make it even more

important, allow the following: let the PCs (and important NPCs) use their Luck points to subtract from damage that has just penetrated their Suit's torso on a 1 Luck/1 Kill basis. This will increase PC survivability at such a potentially lethal level of play. This is a VERY optional rule and should be considered with great care by the GM, but is in keeping with the show.

Movement: All ships (those who have a x10 Scale Modifier) automatically have only half their MA after it has been figured normally. This keeps them from operating at speeds beyond that of a Mobile Suit/Armor. Otherwise they'd probably outrun our heroes, which wouldn't be in keeping with the show.

Also, since Gundam mecha are mobile (pun intended), they should move a lot, which most mecha don't do much under normal rules.

If a mecha is dodging during a turn, it may add its last expenditure of Movement Allowance divided by 10 (rounded up) to its dodging modifier. See the chart below.

Mobile Suit/Armor vs Ships: Due to size differences, it's easier for a Mobile Suit or Armor to hit ships than vice-versa, so MS/A have a +4 to their to-hit rolls against ships. Also, ships have a -4 to hit mecha with their main weapons, with two exceptions: weapons built with an Attack Factor (automated Energy Melee weapons) and weapons that have bought the Anti-Personnel option (which, in this case, becomes Anti-Mobile Suit).

Ships: Two other notes, which should help cover what the *Techbook* rules leave out and what *Mekton Empire* is fuzzy about. Ships (primarily NPC ships) should be given three averaged stats: an Average REF, Average Piloting Skill and Average Gunnery Skill. The REF should be rolled on a D10, the two skills on 1D4+2 (or 1D10/2+2 if you lack a D4) to give a representation of crew capacities.

Rather than using the Attack Value system from *Empire*, use the normal combat rules, using the average REF and the appropriate skill of the two.

MA DODGE MODIFIER (with normal -2 added)

MA	Modifier
0	-2
5-15	-3
16-25	-4
26-35	-5
36+	-6

These are used normally, even when Automated Melee attacks are used, since there's no rule on how to do this. Maneuver Values for ships should also be used normally, but equal to the Original Weight/10, with no real bottom. That way, ships will go in their times as well, but normally after the more maneuverable MS/A.

YEAR (U.C.)

WHAT'S AVAILABLE

79-81 Beam Weapons (Basic Particle Beams, no Machinefire, no Wide Angle, no Anti-Missile)
Command Armor
Electronic Warfare
Energy Melee Weapons
Environmental Protection
ESPer Lenses (Jion MA only),
Jump Rockets
Maneuver Verniers (late in the war)
Melee Weapons
Missiles (Ships and Armors)
Projectile Weapons
Refined Sensors
Remote Units (Jion MA only)
Shields
Thought Control (Jion MA only)
Weapon Mounts
Linear Seats (very rare, late in war only)
Core Block System
Thrusters (max MA 20)

82-83 Beam Weapons (Machinefire, slightly more advanced)
Combining Mecha
Modular Skeletons
Maneuver Verniers (general use)
Reconnaissance Systems
Alpha Refined Armor

84-86 Beam Weapons (advanced)
Energy Pools
ESPer Lenses (in MS)
Missiles (in MS)
Beta Refined Armor
Refined Hydraulics
Refined Powerplants (max 1 level over-size)
Remote Units (in MS)
Stealth
Thought Control (in MS)
Transformables
Thrusters (unlimited MA)

87-93 Gamma Refined Armor
Internal Automation
Refined Powerplants (max 2 level over-size)
V-Max System

93+ Anything and everything, theoretically anyway.



WHAT AND WHEN

Next on the list is continuity, which, for Gundam, is a little more important than with most anime shows. Basically this consists of what was available and when, which should help you picking when your game takes place in the Gundam continuity.

In addition to the above timeline, there are several pieces of technology unique to Gundam, or at least needed here. These are:

• **Linear Seats:** Introduced in prototype form at the end of the One Year War in one Mobile Suit (the "Alex" Gundam from Gundam 0080), the Linear Seat is an addition to the existing Sensory Systems, and costs 2 CP. This sensory setup creates a 360 degrees image of the surroundings for the pilot and gives him a +1 to any Awareness/Notice rolls made in the Mobile Suit. However, Suits which use this system cannot use a Core Block System and this system must be placed where the pilot is in the mecha.

• **Core Block System:** This is a system that allows the MS to have a fighter hidden inside the Suit; it acts primarily as an escape pod for the pilot. This system can also allow the Suit to split its upper body from its waist and legs (only an option after 0083) as an emergency measure.

To purchase this system, the Suit must pay a x.2 cost multiplier which takes up 10% of that cost in space. This will allow the torso servo to separate and transform into an astrofighter form which uses the torso-mounted thrusters to move. If the suit just separates from its lower body and does not transform (an option) it may re-attach itself to its lower body at any time at the cost of one action. If it separates and transforms, then only a tech can rejoin the two halves because the alignment of components has been altered.

• **Mobile Armor Form:** This is a Transformable option which allows a Mobile Armor (generally of non-humanoid, quasi-aerodynamic form) to become a Mobile Suit (humanoid form) and vice versa.

Mobile Armor	cost x.4
Modifiers:	+4 MA, -2 MV
Propulsion:	thrusters
Hardpoints:	torsos, heads, wings
Special:	half damage from torso hits
Scales:	x1 only.

Basically a spacegoing Tank, it follows the same basic rules. However, it cannot function in an atmosphere (there may be exceptions, but we're not sure). It is fast and dangerous, but loses maneuverability in order to gain armor. They can also benefit from shields the same way tanks do.

• **Minovski Particles:** These are particles which come from the special powerplants that mecha in the Gundam universe use. This is what we've been told, although we've also read that Minovski particles are released by ships as a form of electronic warfare. So here is our version for game use: it borrows from both sources and observations.

The particles are a by-product of the powerplants. Normally, they are shielded and kept under control, but the shielding can be removed to release the particles into space, where they block radar and radio waves. All MS/A and ships can do this, but the amount of particles generated increases with the size of the engine generating them, as will particle density. As a rough estimate, a powerplant can release particles to cover a radius equal to its powerplant kills times 100 meters. This will normally not be done, since these particles affect the releaser as well as everything in that radius, and will stay around for at least 10 minutes (a guess — lack of documentation on this). They are normally only released just before combat or when someone wants to move unnoticed. The trick with this, as seen in Gundam 0083, is that other ships can guess the size and class of the releasing ship based on the size of the gap in their radar and/or the particle density around them. It's a good bet that when these things pop up around you, you're about to be attacked!

• **Space Thrusters:** The thruster ratings for Mektons are listed for mecha in a gravity well, where few Gundam combats occur. Therefore, a little change is needed. To make things simple, a Mek that has 3 thrust points less than it requires for base flight can fly at a full 12 MA in space only, and either "skim" (no higher than 5m off the ground) if it has sufficient leg mounted thrusters, or jump in 4 MA jet-assisted leaps, when it is under close to 1g gravity. Any Mek can pull one of these if it has full thrust points or better.

If a mecha has 1/2 the required Thrust Points, it may only move at 1/2 normal MA in space and do none of the extra "tricks". If it has 1/4 the required thrust it may move at 1/4 speed.

CONVERSIONS INC.

Finally, here's a pair of simple formulae for converting those model kits or magazine stats (such as this one provides, thanks guys!) of your favorite Gundam mecha. At least, they should cut down some of the guesswork.

1) Number of levels of Maneuver Verniers Needed = (Apogee Motors-5)/5 and rounding up.

2) MA = 12 + (Full Thrust-Full Combat Weight [the original's, not yours]/5). Round the result up.

A FEW WORDS TO THE WISE...

With these rules you should now be capable of staging a game that takes place anywhere between The One Year War and Char's Counterattack with reasonable accuracy. While we have tried to cover everything we felt was important, there are, of course, omissions on our part, whether on purpose or by accident. For example, Fuel Rules, which were given in Mecha Press #3, should normally be used in Gundam, but only if the GM feels they are needed. In the show, they are usually a plot device, so it's up to you.

If these rules interest you and you've never seen Gundam, then we suggest you pick up copies of the Gundam novels, which are available in English (from Del Rey, check your bookstore) and tell a version of the story of the One Year War. You could also use them to stage your own Gundam-like campaign, which is always an option.

Regardless, we hope these rules can help some of you out there achieve the feel of this legendary series even better. For, in a genre packed with mecha shows of all kinds, Gundam is one of the oldest and one of the best.



NASHAN'S ARENA

By Stephane Matis & Marc A. Vezina

The boardroom fell silent as the Margrave began talking quietly. The room's other occupants strained to hear the words from the head of the table. Her voice carried authority while the words themselves were veiled in poetic style. When the Margrave decided that she had their attention in a firm grip, she began to speak louder and more forcefully. None would deny her authority here.

"This debate has been going on for too long. I gave six months for the board to come to a conclusion and you failed. This inability on your part influenced my decision to follow-up the proposal submitted by Ludwig, Henry and Ferrier. Nashan Diversified

will enter the lucrative military market. The move will contribute to our technology and security."

A low murmur cut through the crowd. Adjacent members turned to face each other, while their hushed commentaries barely reached the Margrave. She took in the situation with her usual calm demeanor, but knew full well that the representatives of Nashan Hydraulics would oppose her even now. As if on cue, the head of Nashan Hydraulics began in earnest.

"Margrave, I believe I talk for many at this table. We understand your stance on this subject, but we are unable to fathom why we need such an elaborate and expensive implementation. The fact remains, the board is divided only because of the costs involved. If we were to cut the implementation costs in half, this board would approve faster than it takes a Tabarin to kill its prey."

Curious. Does he really mean it?

"And how do you propose to cut the price of the plan in half, Mr. Sandstorm?" the Margrave said quietly.

Sandstorm presented a pensive face for a minute and with a steady gaze, he said: "Well, first of all, we need to cut R&D by promoting the equipment into wide use faster. This can be achieved by selling to Solaris Design Studios ... of course, ... yes ... of course!"

With his eyes ablaze by the sudden idea, Sandstorm began to talk in a most animated fashion, stopping only to catch his breath. Margrave V had never seen this intense side of the young Director, and as she listened with apparent cold detachment, she saw the real genius. And as she

listened further, her mind raced ahead to the time when she will retire and choose a successor, and she saw

that her only logical choice will be William Sandstorm.

NASHAN DIVERSIFIED

Nashan Diversified is the largest conglomerate in the Inner Sphere. The company got there by shrewd dealings and excellent business soave. Of course, detractors claim that Nashan got there by judicious blackmail and "Black Ops". Either way, Nashan is a power to be reckoned with in the Inner Sphere, and the throne of this corporate empire rests in the hands of Margrave V.

Over the years, Nashan Diversified did just that. It diversified. The only real exception to their corporate holdings was the design and final assembly of military hardware. This peaceful stance didn't originate from any higher purpose. The company simply didn't believe in freezing huge sums of money in slow to progress military R&D.

The Gray Death Core was an unwelcome alarm to Nashan, as smaller companies would soon have access to technology only Nashan had been able to produce. The company quickly went on a buying rampage, scooping up would-be competition. The plans in place accounted for a slow rebuilding of cash reserves thus depleted.

Then the Clans made their presence known. Among the first industrial casualties were fringe companies of Nashan. Even the dreaded Nashan "Black Ops" were unable to fight these new military Titans. As the Clans advance conquered all in their wake, a boardroom debate quickly stalled Nashan Diversified. One faction called for increased military spending to protect company assets. The other faction, fearing that their precarious money reserves and their bottom line would be invariably hurt, proposed to sell those firms that would come into harm's way. The bickering forced Margrave V to step into the fray and quit her corporate dominion. She immediately discounted both arguments and called for proposals. To forestall further infighting, she also opened the proposal process to outside consultants.

When the board still did not come to a viable conclusion, the Margrave simply announced that she was going with the most expensive and technologically ground-breaking proposal. The Ludwig, Henry and Ferrier proposal was to clone the Clan OmniMechs.

Retired Major William Sandstorm, the Director of Nashan Hydraulics, was unconvinced by the whole proposal. He had already argued extensively against it and scored many valid points. First and foremost was that Wolf's Dragoons owned factories capable to build the OmniMechs and it might just be cheaper to buy the technical plans, rather than spend Trillions of C-Bills re-inventing them. He was careful to discount industrial "Black Ops" against the likes of Blackwell and 7th Commando.



On the fateful day of decision, William Sandstorm opposed the Margrave V's decision publicly. But when she prodded him for an alternative, he surprised even himself with the answer. Nashan SolDesign: a new company marking Nashan's entry into the lucrative and instructive world of Solaris VII competitive design and combat environment. The product: InnerSphere OmniMechs based on the in-house QuickConnect™ system. To enable the proper evaluation of the equipment, Nashan would even build an arena in the Solaris reaches, where new and diverse fighting styles would be promoted.

NASHAN SOLDESIGN

Nashan SolDesign's first action was to buy an entire mountain range in a remote region of Solaris VII. The site was closed off while the company built its research and design facilities and a small arena.

The arena itself was nothing exceptional; it looked very much like the standard terrain used for basic simulations by all Mechwarrior training academies. The main difference was the numerous sensors and cameras designed to record all aspects and actions of the combats for future analysis. The field is also quite special: several weapon pods lie around for whoever wants to pick them up.

The pods are scattered all over the place. The exact number of pods depends on the conditions of the particular match. The habitual number of pod is about 5-6 per machine. There are three types of pods: 4 tons, 8 tons, and close combat.

A pod can contains weapons, ammo (if needed), heatsinks, or simply dead weight. A few devious games have included bomb pods, where the pod was actually dangerous to the user! A pod can contain anything — they all look the same, except that 8-ton pods have two connectors and are painted with red and white warning stripes. See the sidebar for a few sample pods.

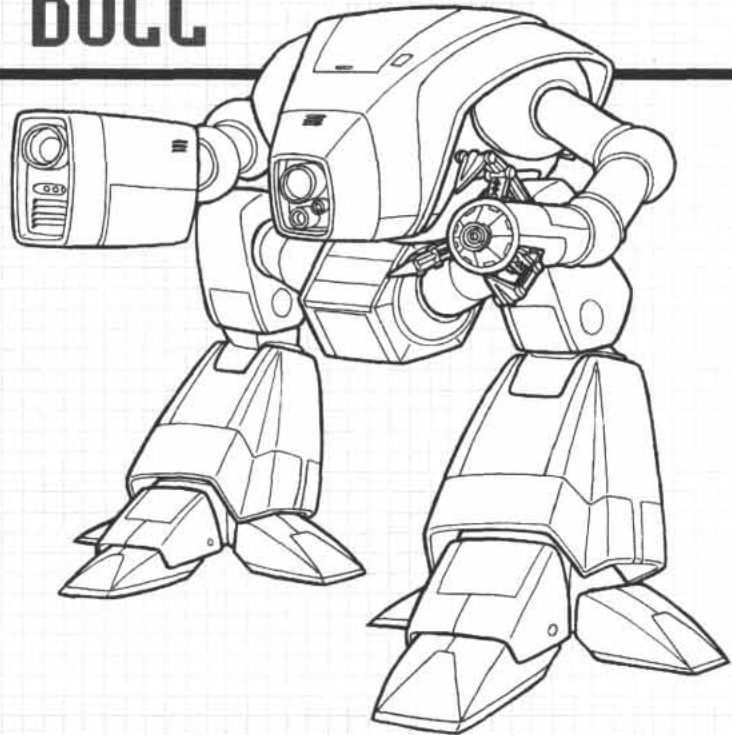
The income from the holovision rights and the spectators serves to pay the cost of the R&D, so Nashan has next to nothing to pay for this operation. In addition, one out of three fights is done for charity, so many famous Mechwarriors attend and participate solely for this reason — Nashan, on the other hand, is happy to record the performance of their machines when piloted by some of the best on Solaris.

ARENA 'MECHS

Two new types of Battlemech were created expressly for this arena, the Pit Bull and the Pit Fighter. Both are 30 tonners (see attached stats) with no weapons. Nashan's engineers observed that heavier

NSD-01

PIT BULL



TECHNICAL READOUT

TYPE: NSD-01 Pit Bull

Equipment:	Mass
Internal Structure:	1.5
Engine: 210	9
Walk: 7	
Run: 11	
Jump: 0	
Heat Sinks: 10	0
Gyro:	3
Cockpit:	3
Armor Factor: 98	5.5

	Internal Structure	Armor Value
Head:	3	9
Center Torso:	10	13/4
Rt./Lt. Torso:	7	12/3
Rt./Lt. Arm:	5	8
Rt./Lt. Leg:	7	13

WEAPONS AND AMMO:

Type	Loc	Crit	Tonnage
Pod Space	LA	-	4
Pod Space	RA	-	4

'Mechs tend to fight slugging matches — not very useful when collecting battle data. The Battlemechs' low weight class was chosen so that the pilot and the tactics would influence the fight more than the actual technology.

Each machine's arm ends in the patented QuickConnect™ system from Nashan. The QuickConnect™ is composed of three "fingers" and a fire control feed from the 'Mech central targeting computer. Weapon pods are equipped with special reversed connectors, so all a 'Mech has to do to grab a pod is slide the connector inside and lock the

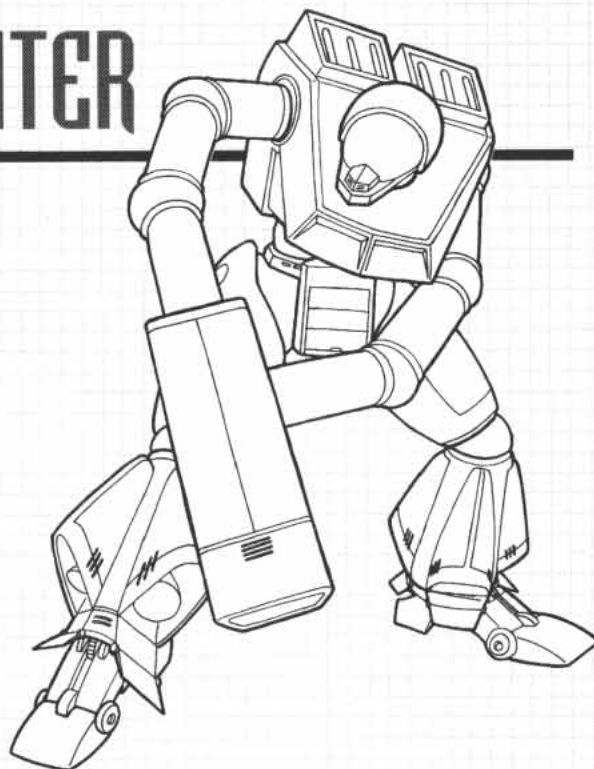
"fingers" in place. This system, while even more versatile than the Clans' own omni-system, is more fragile and harder to use properly.

GAME EFFECTS

Matches in Nashan's arena use the standard Battletech mapsheets, placed side by side. No 'Mech may exit the map as it is considered enclosed by high walls — the access doors are closed during the fights. Weapon pods (4, 8 and close combat) are scattered over the map. The exact number of pods depends on the scenario and should be decided by the players.

NSD-02

PIT FIGHTER



TECHNICAL READOUT

TYPE: NSD-02 Pit Fighter

Equipment:	Mass
Internal Structure:	3
Engine: 150	5.5
Walk: 5	
Run: 8	
Jump: 5	
Heat Sinks: 10	0
Gyro:	2
Cockpit:	3
Armor Factor: 107	6

	Internal Structure	Armor Value
Head:	3	9
Center Torso:	10	15/5
Rt./Lt. Torso:	7	13/3
Rt./Lt. Arm:	5	9
Rt./Lt. Leg:	7	14

WEAPONS AND AMMO:

Type	Loc	Crit	Tonnage
Pod Space	LA	-	4
Pod Space	RA	-	4
Jump Jets	RL	2	1
Jump Jets	LL	2	1
Jump Jets	CT	1	0.5

Placing them on the map should be done in a random manner; alternatively, one player can do the setup and the other player get to choose his entry point.

Before the start of the match, each Mechwarrior must choose a software for the targeting computer, either Energy, Projectile, or Missile. The program allows weapons of the chosen type to be fired without penalty, all other types suffering a -1 to hit for lack of correct targeting software.

The QuickConnect™ system is a modified hand actuator, so it doesn't take any weight or space: it just

fill up the critical normally allotted to the hand actuator. Should this actuator be destroyed, any pod carried is dropped immediately, and this arm cannot carry pods anymore.

The Mechwarrior can use the "hand" to pick up a weapon pod. This is done by stepping in the same hex as the pod and making a Piloting roll. If the roll succeeds, the pod is now safely attached to the 'Mech; if not, the pod remains on the ground and the pilot can try again next turn. No weapon fire is possible during the turn of the pick-up attempt, and all Piloting roll modifiers apply.

- Only arms can use weapon pods. Each arm may carry up to half the total pod space available — both arms must be used to wield an 8-ton pod, for example.
- Because of the unstable connection, roll 1d6 each time the carrying arm is hit: on a roll of 1 or 2, the "hand" lets go and the pod falls on the ground. When carried, the pod and its contents are considered part of the arm for heat, damage and critical hit purpose.
- Two-handed pods split the criticals equally between the arms.

- A 'Mech can try to rip off a pod from its opponent. A functional hand actuator is necessary. Treat the attack as a punch with a -1 modifier; if successful, roll 1d6. The pod falls on the ground on 1-3 for one-handed pods, 1-2 for two-handed pods.

CONCLUSION

- For the moment, only the two arena 'Mechs use the QuickConnect™. Although versatile, the system needs to be calibrated for many different kinds of weapons and is temperamental and prone to breakdowns. If the tests at the arena prove successful, Nashan intends to start manufacturing Battlemechs equipped with the QuickConnect™ system in a few years.

POD EXAMPLES

4 Tons:

- Streak SRM 2 (2)
Ammo (50)
- Medium Pulse Laser
Heat Sinks (2)
- Small Lasers (4)
Heat Sinks (2)
- Medium Lasers (3)
Heat Sink
- Bomb (5 pts damage)
- Dead Weight

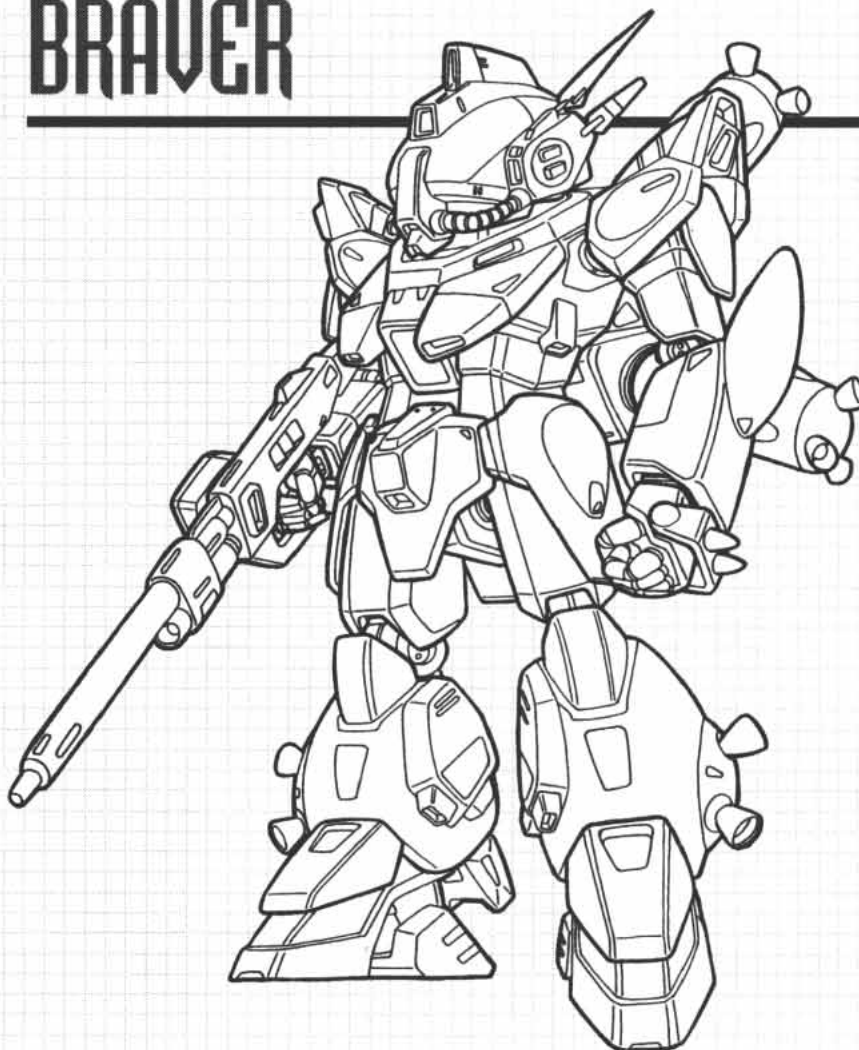
8 Tons:

- Large Laser
Heat Sinks (3)
- PPC
Heat Sink
- LRM 15
Ammo (8)
- Bomb (10 pts damage)
- Dead Weight

Close Combat:

- Club
- Hatchet
- Shield (IS 8, AF16)

SPT-BV-15C
BRAVER



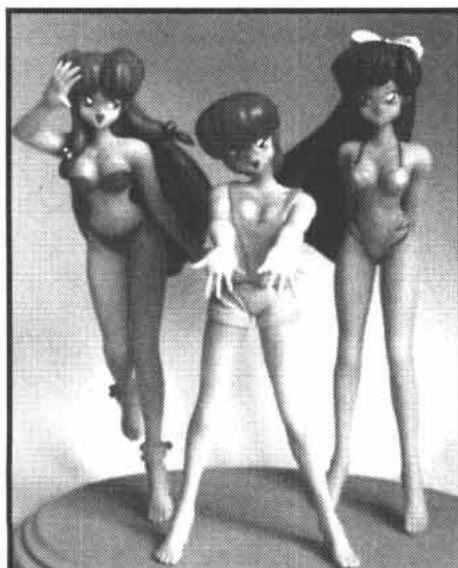
The Braver is moderately fast both on the ground and in the air. It is very maneuverable because of its many thrusters, so be sure to use that in a fight. The energy weapon makes it easy to cause criticals in close assault, but the lack of armor is a serious drawback. Use close assault only as a last resort.

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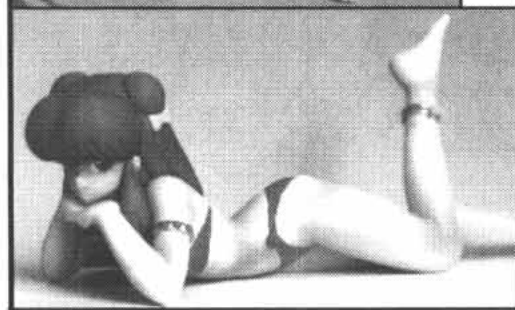
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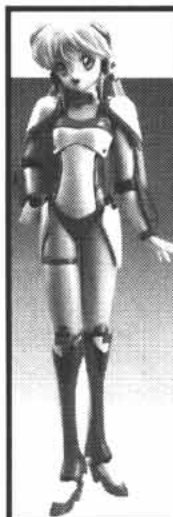
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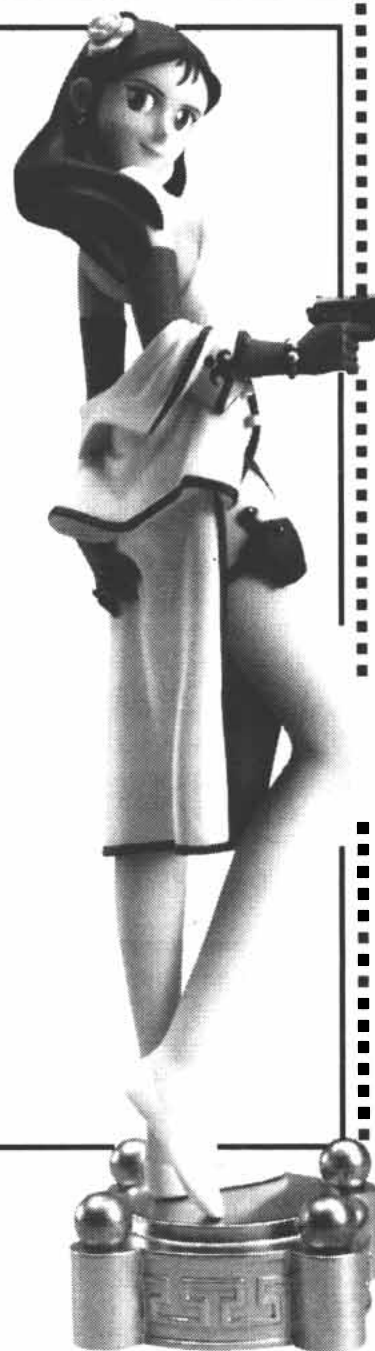
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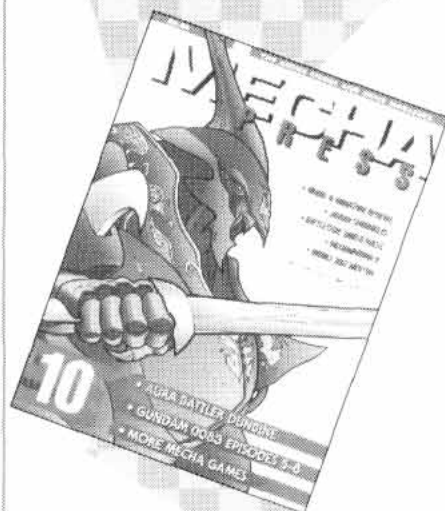
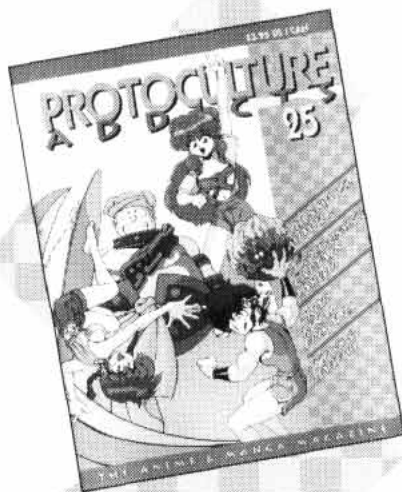
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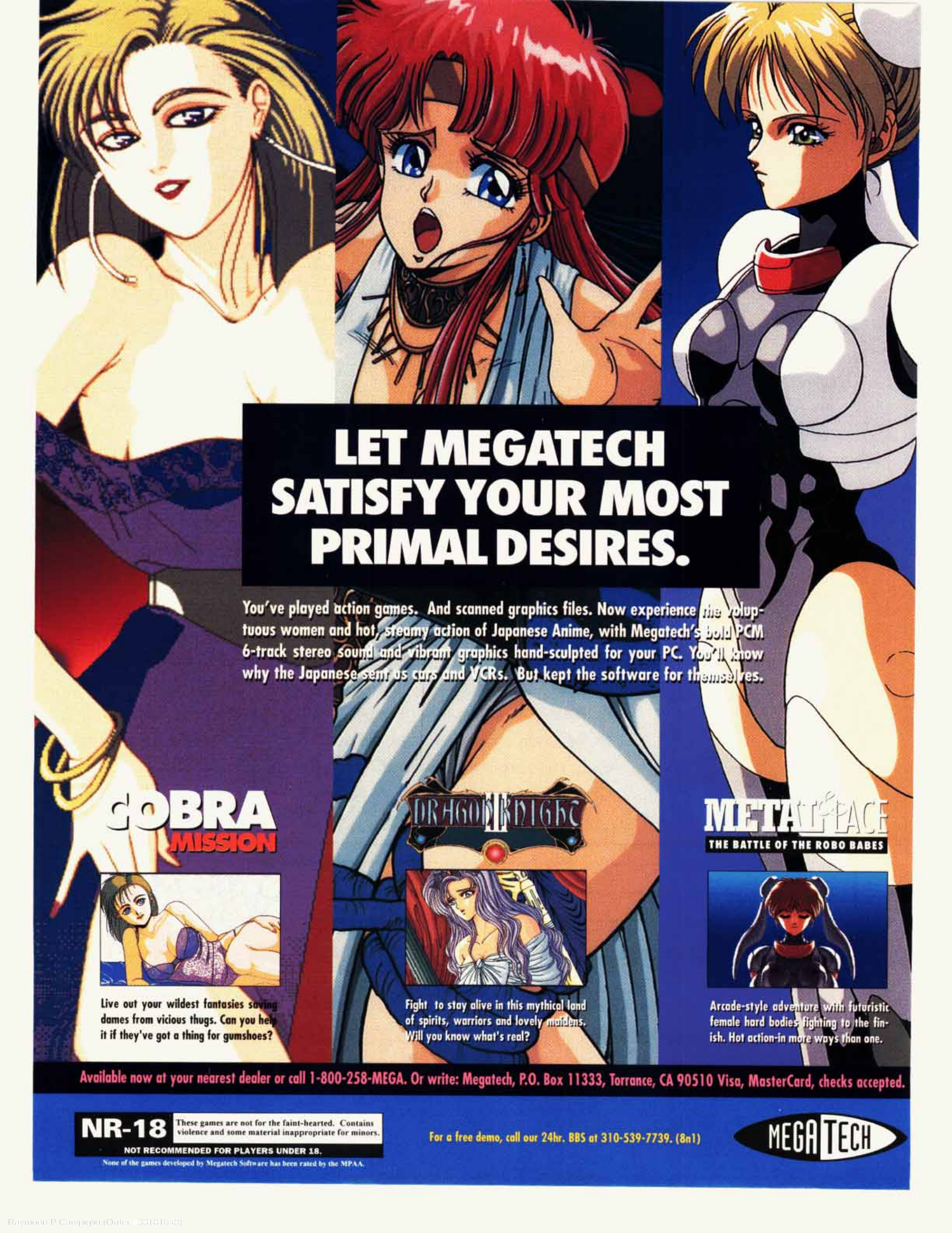
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